Halo 3

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R Dft 4 //

CAMPAIGN MISSION: ABSOLUTION

FADE FROM WHITE

EXT. OUTER SPACE

A backdrop of blackness, with only small pinholes of light is pierced by a massive, burning space cruiser. The large craft is aflame in its rear compartments and appears to be under attack. In pursuit...there is nothing. The cruiser is unorthodox, with large, narrow extensions. Extremely angular and geometric, it is certainly alien in origin. The ship is *Cessation*.

PAN RIGHT (following cruiser)

Now a large, luminous blue-green planet fills the void of space and the cruiser appears to head toward it, suffering from interior ruptures and still reeling from what appears to have been a violent attack. The flames are pearl-white gashes of plasma gushing from various breaches along the rear sections of the main hull. *Cessations* state is dire.

EXT. *CESSATION,* BRIDGE

The front cabin appears untouched as various beings move about in front of the translucent viewport. This is the control deck, the bridge of the ship. It is complete with calm, lucid beings who act in stark contrast with the dramatic issues that engulf the rear sections of the ship.

ZOOM INTO VIEWPORT

INT. *CESSATION,* BRIDGE

Inside there are several large beings, at least three meters in height. They are humanoid creatures, but appear thin and sinewy in stature. Their faces are long, narrow and their eyes are covered by vertical slits of flesh that run the length of their faces. The beings are adorned in a variety of clothing, some wear eloquent fine robes and others have metallic armor. They all have long arms and legs with a feral haunch and large, clawed feet. Their skin is a brown and a grayish coloration, with mild variations and markings among each of them. At the center of the variety of beings is their leader, a large, powerful creature with a demanding posture and an intense presence.

CLOSE ON FACE: This creature is extremely commanding and has an underlying strength that is undeniable.

His title is OBERION THE GREAT. He turns to a nearby, armored being. This one is clearly a military leader of some sort. His name is VILARIUS. The creatures voices are deep and resonate heavily across the bridge.

OBERION
Will the siege overrun our front lines, Vilarius?

VILARIUS
The front lines are holding well, my Excellency. Today will be the day of our victory. The *Cessation* will not fall prey to the Flood.

An impatient, brutish creature struts out from behind Vilarius, as though trying to get the Oberion's attention. He is much larger than the others, almost obese. His name is RUGARI and he is another high-ranking military entity.

RUGARI
These filthy beasts will fall by our staffs and swords. Lord Oberion, we are prepared to battle with the beast until the very end.

OBERION
Rugari, your faith in our ability to wage was is noted, but misplaced.

In the corner is a female being, dressed in eloquent robes as though she is an individual of royalty. Her face is hard and tense. It is clear that she wants to speak out, but she refrains from doing so. Her name is MAELIA.

OBERION (CONT'D)
The irony of this day is that we will survive though we still battle them. But no one else will.

VILARIUS
My lord? (curious)

It is clear that Vilarius doesn't understand the comment, but he may well be the only one. The room has various CONSULATES, adorned in political clothing and are muted and forced to reside in the outer fringes of the bridge.

OBERION
Commander Vilarius, go to the front lines and bring your greatest, most trusted warrior. Today, his skill is needed for the gravest of tasks.

CLOSE ON FACE: Oberion looks toward the planet, his eyes incensed. Vilarius leaves at once, with a slight bow.

Maelia waives her hand at the others, advising them silently to exit. She finally steps forward, as the others leave the bridge and walks closer to Oberion.

MAELIA
So, here we are again, but now you’re entrusting our fate to soldier.

OBERION
I won’t risk falling prey to the parasite. It nearly happened once, and all that we had worked for almost came to an end.

MAELIA
And what if the soldier uncovers the truth?

OBERION
I have already foreseen as much and prepared accordingly. Fear not, Maelia. Everything is going as I have designed.

INT. *CESSATION*, CENTRAL BAY MAJOR

A violent battle ensues. These beings, their warriors and soldiers, are battling the combat forms of the Flood. The parasite brutally charges across the hangar with uncoordinated, random, yet disarming tactics. Chaff from the Flood and blood from the beings scatters across the floor as they attack. The beings hold a variety of unique weapons and devices, but the Flood forms are clearly stronger and more aggressive. Groups of soldiers are being cut down by the sheer numbers of their enemy.

One single being stands out above the rest. A male, lean and muscular, with a very intense, bright green colored skin darts into the fray. He is armed with the Scepter of Anduu and a pair of sidearms, Chalice Foils, that are belted to his upper back. His body narrowly barrels through the conflict around, darting between fierce battles and coming into contact with several Flood combat forms along the way.

His method of attack is swift and merciless. Prying the scepter from his taut grasp, he bats it about with his arms in a blurring reconciliation of speed and power. With Each strike, the long rod emits a red-colored sickle of light.

This razor sharp blade rends the Flood creatures lifeless, cutting them into pieces that drop to the ground with a burst of mold-colored dust. He leaps into the air, striking one down with the blade and firing at another with a powerfully concussive force from the scepter’s tip. He is clearly a master of the weapon and of combat in general. His speed and agility is only matched by his precise and ruthless calculations.

He buries the scepter in the belt at his back and removes the other two weapons, foils. Again he leaps into battle, this time deftly jarring the oncoming Flood horde with high-velocity concentrations of energy from his two weapons. They are accurate and fast, but he uses them with a professional ease. After a short moment, the horde that was approaching has been reduced to a pile of husks and corroded body parts which he stands atop. His head perks up from it’s fevered tightness with the sound of a commander.

VILARIUS (O.S.)
Cephaus! Report to the bridge at immediately! Cephaus! Report to the bridge immediately!

CEPHAUS, the extraordinary warrior, is both surprised and curious at once. He marshals a controlled amount of power and leaps through the conflagration of body parts and weapons heading toward the rear lines. There, he finds Commander Vilarius. He bows his head in honor.

CEPHAUS
The bridge, my Commander?

VILARIUS
Yes. Our Lord, Oberion the Great, wishes to speak with my best warrior. There are none like you, Cephaus. Go quickly and do not let him wait.

CEPHAUS
Yes, Commander.

INT. *CESSATION,* BRIDGE - MOMENTS LATER

Cephaus, covered in blood and dry Flood remains, enters the bridge. There is only one individual on the bridge: Oberion the Great, one of several leaders of their kind. Through chance and circumstance, he happens to be the military leader of their campaign against the Flood. Cephaus bows before him, laying his weapons down and becoming prostrate. Oberion turns to greet him.

OBERION
Rise, my friend.

He walks toward Cephaus and the warrior rises. They are nearly the same size, Oberion is grizzled and broad, while Cephaus is young and taut. Cephaus is notably curious, but not nervous or shaken in the least. The two begin to walk, side-by-side, around the bridge.

OBERION (CONT'D)
You might wonder why we brought you here. What your special purpose is?

CEPHAUS
I did, my lord. (nods)

OBERION
'Cephaus,' what a great name for a warrior. Do you know it's origin?

CEPHAUS
It means "Unwavering Protector" in the Bikari-Anduu tongue.

OBERION
Yes. So you are not only a skilled soldier, but also a well-educated one as well.

They stop near the viewport and stare at the beautiful blue-green planet. Oberion's voice is terse and manipulative, while Cephaus remains stoic.

OBERION (CONT'D)
Do you know what this is, Cephaus?

CEPHAUS
It is the housing perch of our central defense. It holds the first installation: The Ark.

OBERION
That is correct. Do you know it's purpose?

CEPHAUS
All warriors of Anduu are required to learn the pledge of 'The Seven Rings.' It is part of our birthright.

OBERION
Can you recall the final passage for me?

Cephaus is overtly suspicious as another explosion in Central Bay Major goes off, causing the ship to buckle. He seemingly wonders what purpose this conversation has in the light of their current situation.

CEPHAUS
‘In the event of complete loss, as a last hope of restoration, one must activate the first ring to allow secured passage our kind and complete annihilation of the Flood. It is the only hope for all life.’

OBERION
It is the only hope for our way of life you know. ‘The Pledge’ is perfect truth, do you agree?

CEPHAUS
I do. But surely, your Greatness, that time is not now.

OBERION
(becomes sullen and grave)

CEPHAUS
The activation of the rings was meant as a last resort. For hundreds of years we have been able to fight the Flood, to defend our worlds. It never came to such a threat.

OBERION
As we speak now, my friend, the plains of Anduu are afire. The temples of Kalmanni and Vilupor are in shambles, destroyed by the Gravemind creature and his horrors. The Flood have reached our very homes and despite our crusade against them, they have won. I have received this information only moments ago.

CLOSE ON FACE: Cephaus’ mind races across the galaxy to the places he calls home.

FLASH:

EXT. PLAINS OF ANDUU

The lush green plains of the planet Anduu, burning. The Flood combat forms scurry through the once peaceful habitat under the cover of night, while defenseless farmers are torn to shreds.

FLASH:

INT. TEMPLE OF VILUPOR

The porous ivory temples of the planet Vilupor are overrun by the roots and membrane of rampant Flood infestation. Various forms amble around, and despite it being the middle of the day a gaseous smog covers the sky.

FLASH:

INT. *CESSATION,* BRIDGE

Cephaus is now visibly shaken. He appears bewildered. Angry.

CEPHAUS
My family. My home.

OBERION (V.O.)
They are as good as dead, Cephaus. There is nothing at our homes for us any longer.

FLASH:

EXT. HILLSIDE VILLAGE OF ANDUU

During the day in the beautiful, lush landscapes of Anduu, there is another frightful image. The cluster of homes that line a cresting hillside are filled with swarms of Flood forms, like running water, swarming throughout the territory. It seems impossible for anyone or anything to have survived this outbreak.

INT. *CESSATION,* BRIDGE

OBERION
You know the power of the Flood. Once it consumes it’s victims, they are no longer who they once were.
(MORE)

OBERION(CONT'D)
There is only one way to stop them...

CEPHAUS

‘The Pledge.’

OBERION
Commander Vilarius chose you because you are his best. Today will be your most sacred mission. In short time, we will sever the ship at Bay Major, ensuring that the Flood threat on our ship will be abated. You will take a single spore-craft out aft side and drop to the planet’s surface at the gateway. There, you will make contact with the monitor and instigate ‘The Pledge.’

CEPHAUS
In doing this, all intelligent life will die. Are there no stragglers? No survivors that can be saved?

OBERION
We have lost complete communication with all. At modest estimations, we can only assume the worst. You will, of course, find the sustainment hollow available to maintain your current age and health while you await our return.

Cephaus is notably crestfallen and concerned; the conflict in his face is clearly displayed.

OBERION (CONT’D)
Do not doubt yourself, Cephaus. Today, you will be a hero of the ages. The Guardians will look down on you with pleasure, as your fame is learned by all unto infinitude. Are you prepared?

CEPHAUS
Yes, my Excellency.

OBERION
Then go forth, ‘Unwavering Defender.’ Today your name becomes destiny.

Cephaus walks from the room, and the door shuts behind him. He leaves and the room goes dead with silence. Hidden in the shadow recesses of the room, Maelia walks forward.

MAELIA
You smell of sulfur when you lie. I do believe he suspects something.

INT. *CESSATION*, SOUTHERN CORRIDOR

As the two leaders talk on the bridge, Cephaus makes his way down a narrow corridor.

OBERION (O.S.)
He is a mindless tool, that is all. Today we will accomplish what we have throughout our history. The restoration process is a necessity for you and I. It is the only way we can exist forever.

Cephaus enters a small room with a chest. Inside the chest is a black box. He removes something from it out of view and then returns it to its place.

MAELIA (O.S.)
Not this time. I am afraid, we will all perish. The Guardians have whispered to me as much.

INT. SPORE-CRAFT

Cephaus straps himself in carefully into the small, cramped cockpit of the spore-craft. He is tense and deliberate with his movements, almost unexpectedly.

CLOSE ON FACE. His eyes are moist and wide-open. He appears angered and fearful, yet determined.

EXT. OUTER SPACE

With a loud crack and a pulse of light, the spore-craft is jettisoned from an open bay door toward the planet.

FADE TO WHITE

MAIN TITLE:

H A L O 3

FADE FROM WHITE

CAMPAIGN MISSION - THE PERILOUS ADYTUM

EXT. EARTH

The picturesque brilliant blue-green color of the planet has changed very little over the course of time. Battles, however, are raging about the planet’s atmosphere and orbit. A single space platform, Cairo Station, remains in view, as well as multiple cruisers and destroyers, both human and Covenant, unleashing hell upon each other. Explosions and plasma blasts punctuate the visual survey of this conflict.

SUBTITLE:

EARTH, 117,649 YEARS LATER

PAN RIGHT

With the unmistakable tremors of an approaching spacecraft, a familiar ship known as *The Perilous Adytum*, which once powered the Covenant capital of High Charity through Forerunner technology, brazenly rockets into view. It’s direction is clear: Earth. The ship becomes smaller and smaller in the distance.

EXT. OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN

It is some point in the middle of the day, as the sun’s heat bears down hard on the ocean’s surface. *The Perilous Adytum* races forward at a blistering pace, several hundred meters above the ocean’s surface. A massive wake forms in the water behind it.

The familiar voice of LORD FLEET ADMIRAL SIR TERRENCE HOOD is heard off-screen, accompanied with the crackle of radio communication.

LORD HOOD (O.S.)
Chief, what’s your position?

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, PERIPHERAL CARGO CHAMBER

The MASTER CHIEF, SPARTAN 117, holds on tight as the gravity of the planet and the ship’s inertia on his body. The craft trembles as it careens across the ocean.

MASTER CHIEF
Indian Ocean. Seventy-eight klicks from the coast of Africa, headed west-northwest.

EXT. OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN

The ship continues to propel itself at a violent, but seemingly effortless speed, toward the approaching continent.

INT. CAIRO STATION, COMMAND CENTER

Lord Hood is pacing feverishly, his brow is furrowed and he is obviously bothered.

LORD HOOD
Any idea where you’re headed?

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, PERIPHERAL CARGO CHAMBER

CLOSE ON FACE: The Master Chief’s demeanor is certain.

MASTER CHIEF
I’ve got a good idea.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA

SUBTITLE: New Mombasa, East African Protectorate

What was once a very opulent and beautiful metropolitan island, New Mombasa has now been reduced to sand and ash. The mammoth skyscrapers have been twisted and mangled, and the city is nothing more than a barren, wasteland. A desert stretching for miles on each side, with an occasional building or structure peeking through the surface of the sand. A gust of wind pushes through the area, echoing its absence of life.

PAN RIGHT

Here the beach can be seen; where there was once docks and cargo frigates, there is nothing but land and ocean.

In the distances and single ball of light can be seen. After only a few seconds, it becomes clearly visible. It is *The Perilous Adytum*. Within a few more seconds, the familiar tremors arrive. Then, in the blink of an eye, it passes overhead, shaking the camera erratically.

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, PERIPHERAL CARGO CHAMBER

The Master Chief gains better footing and begins to get his bearings, still clinging rather tightly to the sidewalls of the cargo chamber. He leaps down from a box and brushes off his shoulders casually, despite the continuous quivering of the ship's architecture. He walks toward the other side of the very narrow chamber that he is in, and locates a door.

LORD HOOD (O.S.)
We were able to take out a large chunk of their fleet with the MAC gun, but I'm afraid many ships slipped through the crack. They bull-rushed us. (pauses) The spooks here aren't reading Cortana's signature. Something happen?

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CARGO CHAMBER

Three Covenant Jackals, thin, birdlike bipeds, with red eyes and lean bodies are patrolling the narrow corridor. They walk in a single-file line, but the last one notices something suspicious about the cargo chamber and stops at the door. He hisses and motions to the others with his hand.

MASTER CHIEF (O.S.)
She stayed behind to do what needed to be done.

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, PERIPHERAL CARGO CHAMBER

LORD HOOD (O.S.)
Both you and her know that it is a violation of protocol. Whatever need there may have been, this risks them learning a great deal about us.

The Master Chief is perusing several open containers in the cargo chamber and finds a strange new weapon referred to as the Demon Shaker. It's an odd Covenant firearm that he has never seen, almost as though it was designed and created outside of a Covenant armory. It appears to simply be a makeshift weapon.

He checks the chamber which reveals active bright blue plasma rounds. He cocks the weapon, becoming familiar with it.

MASTER CHIEF
The risk of her being caught by the Covenant was next to nothing against the very real possibility that they would activate the ring. She stayed to destroy another Halo.

LORD HOOD (O.S.)
Another ring?

MASTER CHIEF
Yes, sir. May I have permission to engage the enemy?

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CARGO CHAMBER

The Jackals are looking at each other with a suspicious consensus and then reach for their plasma pistols. Slowly one edges toward the door, preparing to open it via a control panel to the right of the casing.

LORD HOOD (O.S.)
Always, Master Chief. Always.

With a sudden jarring sound the door breaks free and slams into the nearest Jackal, crushing it against the wall behind where it stood and spraying a bright colored blood across the hallway in all directions. The two other Jackals begin charging up their weapons, as the Master Chief steps from the doorway. He makes quick work of the newfound weapon and eliminates both Jackals with two powerful blasts.

LORD HOOD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Chief, we've located your position on their ship. We're sending your waypoint indicator the coordinates to what appears to be the ship's rear hanger. See if you can hitch a ride out of there.

CHAPTER TITLE: "A Pimp At Sea"

- Navigate through The Perilous Adytum's inner corridors to the hanger.

LORD HOOD (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Chief, you're not going to be able to make it out of the hanger.
(MORE)

LORD HOOD(CONT'D)
They’ve been alerted to your presence and in turn shut down all exit ports. Try to make your to channel ports on the exterior. Hopefully you can disembark when they get to whereever they’re headed.

- Break the Covenant resistance at the hanger and move to the Deck of Constancy.

- Venture across the exterior balcony, eliminating Covenant emplacements along the way.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, OUTSIDE THE SHIP

The Perilous Adytum finally comes to a shallow stop above particularly random patch of sand. The island city of New Mombasa in this area is still unrecognizable. In the distance some remnants of the metropolitan city can be seen as well as the occasional burst of fire or plasma signalling that a battle is still raging there. It appears to be the only remaining vestige of the East African Protectorate.

EXT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, VERANDA ALCOVE

The Master Chief is cleaning some of the purple blood from his chest plate when he notices that the ship is turning up on it’s front end. The ground begins to shift out from under his feet. Quickly, he maneuvers his body to get control of gravity’s pull against the shift. Bodies of dead Covenant warriors, their weapons and various loose items slide across the veranda and eventually off the side of the ship.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, OUTSIDE THE SHIP

The ship continues its movement, rising high into the sky and performing a very odd, acrobatic movement. It is no longer positioned hovering horizontally, but is now a kilometer above the ground, facing downward like a child’s spinning top. It, in true form, begins to spin slowly.

EXT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, VERANDA ALCOVE

The Master Chief has regained footing and is now staring down at a wild variety of platforms that line the outer hull of the ship. *The Perilous Adytum*, twirls in a slow mechanical motion creating a resonating metallic sound that intensifies with in intervals.

The Master Chief looks down at the what was once New Mombasa, and he sees that the desert sand is shifting, as though the ship is causing the ground to open up.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, OUTSIDE THE SHIP

The ship begins to move slowly downward and as it gets closer to the ground, the sand below begins to churn and open up. Within seconds a hole forms. Some transparent energy appears to be digging a hole into the ground.

EXT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, VERANDA ALCOVE

The Master Chief peers down the edge of the ship at the sheer drop and the odd exchange that is occurring on the ground. Suddenly, out from the side of the ship, dozens of Drones appear, drowning out the machine's noise with the sound of their wings.

CHAPTER TITLE: "Base Jumping 101"

LORD HOOD (O.S.)
Chief, just get to the ground. I'm having Charlie Company of the 42nd advance on your position right now. They're bringing a Pelican to extract you. We'll have the LZ momentarily.

- Make your way across the exterior platforms to the opposite side of the ship.

- Locate and enter the ships right-rear valence shaft, using the lift to reach wing.

- Venture down the billow wing and eliminate the Covenant nest at the prow carrier bay.

- Proceed downward through the ship's interior.

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, BRIDGE

The PROPHET OF TRUTH sits motionless watching a hologram of the Master Chief break through Covenant lines in one of the ship's corridors. He slams his fist into the armrest of his hovering chair, shutting off the image and revealing a rugged Brute warrior behind it. The creature's stance and demeanor reveal that he is a leader.

The bridge is a large open floor, with multiple balconies and levels.

There are consoles with various Brutes and Grunts at locations. The gravity in this portion of the craft appears to have been maintained, despite the ships vertical posture. The viewport stares toward the ground and continues to rotate around an ever-enlarging hole.

PROPHET OF TRUTH
He is persistent. Othrys, ready your warriors. I want his head on a stick. Do you understand me?

OTHRYS bows, revealing that he is nearly twice the size of the average Brute. He carries with him a very large, modified version of the infamous Brute Shot weapon. He has black fur, with silver stripes that cross his body at different places and angles, giving him a fiendish look. The belt he wears has the dangling skulls of humans he has recently slain. There are several.

OTHRYS
I do, Prophet. Today will be his last.

Othrys leaves with two Brute escorts. The Prophet sighs to himself.

PROPHET OF TRUTH
That has been said before, rodent.

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, CORRIDOR

Having made his way down the exterior of the hull, to a holding pin just inside the ship, the Master Chief pauses for a brief moment. The Chief stares out a large transparent portico that looks out across Mombasa. Apart from skeletons of buildings, towers and various other structures, most of the city is covered in rubble and sand.

LORD HOOD (O.S.)
There’s a building three kicks east-southeast of your location. It’s called Ivory Tower.

MASTER CHIEF
I’ve got it.

LORD HOOD (O.S.)
What’s your ETA?

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, OUTSIDE THE SHIP

Hundreds of Covenant soldiers pour out of a number of hatches along the hull of the ship, where it has finally met the ground. Many of them are on foot, but several are in Covenant ships: Ghosts, Wraiths, Banshees and Eidolons.

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, CORRIDOR

The Master Chief watches the Covenant horde spread out across the barren wasteland of a desert, in between him and his rendezvous point.

MASTER CHIEF
About five hundred Covenant.

LORD HOOD (O.S.)
Good luck.

MASTER CHIEF
Ten-four.

The Master Chief picks up a plasma grenade that has fallen to the ground and ignites it, allowing the sphere to light up with a blue flame. He places it on a nearby door and walks away calmly.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, OUTSIDE THE SHIP

CAMPAIGN MISSION - WASTELAND

CHAPTER TITLE: “Big Ass Sandbox”

The door blows open with a blue-white explosion.

- Exit the ship and distance yourself from it.

- Break open the Covenant line and acquire a vehicle.

- Cross the dunes and reach Ivory Tower.

The Master Chief leaps from the vehicle onto the ground. In front, lies what is left of Ivory Tower, a renowned public attraction of New Mombasa. The building is severely damaged, only portions remain with the steel frame underpinning and raw concrete. At the base of the tower and directly in front of the Master Chief, is a large crevice.

The Master Chief approaches it and stares above. A Pelican dropship hovers at the top of the remaining twenty floors of the building.

LORD HOOD (O.S.)
The Covenant are advancing on your position so Charlie Company can only remain there for a little longer. Make your way to the top of the building, but watch out. They spotted enemies within the structure.

CHAPTER TITLE: “I Like What You’ve Done To The Place”

- Enter the tower and secure the main floor.

- Scale the levels and destroy the Covenant blockade.

- Reach the rooftop for extraction.

EXT. IVORY TOWER, ROOFTOP

The Pelican drops low, though they are now being threatened by direct vehicle fire; they extract the Master Chief. The upper-part of the structure begins to disintegrate as the Covenant bombard it in their attempt to strike the Pelican.

INT. PELICAN, REAR CARGO HOLD

A young lieutenant approaches the Master Chief and extends his hand, as the Pelican banks hard and begins traveling away from the Covenant forces. They shake and the dark-skinned officer introduces himself with a British accent.

OUTLAW
First Lieutenant, Bruce Outlaw. Nice to finally meet you, Chief. We’ve heard a lot about you, everyone has. (pauses) What the hell is that? (pointing toward the ship)

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, SKY

The Pelican jettisons away from the building with the massive Forerunner ship, still turning in the background.

MASTER CHIEF (O.S.)
I think it’s a key.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, OUTSIDE OF IVORY TOWER

Perched atop a dune, Othrys watches the wind catch sand into the air. He stands there silently, his face in the grip of violent anger.

OTHRYS
Run, demon. Run for now, but your time will come.

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

EXT. ANTARCTICA

SUBTITLE: ANTARCTICA

The ice continent remains, by-in-large, silent, save for the occasional howling of the wind across the snow banks and glaciers. The night’s sky is bright with stars and a full moon. At the end of a rocky outcropping, icicles begin to shake. Soon they begin to snap and shatter, mangling their perfect shapes.

The sound emitting this rumble gets louder and louder until a ball of fire can be seen in the sky. This ball is coming closer without every passing second. Suddenly, it hits the ground like a meteor. The object, which is now clearly the spore-craft, breaks a path across the snow and ice, bouncing violently until it is stopped suddenly by a wall of ice. A trail of melted snow and steam stretches out behind it.

EXT. ANTARCTICA, OUTSIDE SPORE-CRAFT

The hatch opens with a heave and Cephaus steps out of the craft. He grabs several weapons and a satchel from the interior of the pod, and then proceeds to walk across a snow bank towards a specific location.

EXT. ANTARCTICA

Cephaus makes his trip across the frigid landscape and eventually arrives at the base of a mountain. Near a large rock that is connected to the foundation of the mountain, he places a small silver box. He steps away for a second, and moments later strange red markings appear on the rock. He presses them in a certain sequence and then picks up his device and returns to walking.

He does this a second time, and then a third, surrounding a specific area in the shape of a triangle. The ground opens up, dropping the snow below. Without hesitation, Cephaus drops down into the dark hole.

INT. ANTARCTICA, CAVERN

In the depths of this apparent cavern, Cephaus walks cautiously across the ice-structured floor. Streams of moonlight help very little, forcing Cephaus to remove an artificial light from a satchel at his side. Upon igniting it, a massive, metallic wall is revealed. The wall has a various symbols and etchings on it. Cephaus approaches it with brazen determination and begins to place his hands on various symbols. His movements are swift, fluid and deliberate. With the final touch, the wall begins to shake. The loud sound of heavy stones sliding across each other can be heard. Cephaus steps back. The wall cracks along natural lines and opens from inside. There is only darkness beyond the doorway. From the shadows emerges a humming sound followed by a bright green light. Suddenly a sphere emerges from the doorway and hovers right in front of Cephaus. The sphere is MONITOR 01. It speaks in a pithy, light-hearted manner as it hovers directly in front of Cephaus.

MONITOR 01
Welcome, Creator! I am Zero-One, the monitor of all aggregate systems in Installation Zero-One. I’ve been expecting you and I’m looking forward to our time together. How may I be of service to you?

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

CAMPAIGN MISSION - REUNION AND RECIPROCITY

EXT. SPACE, DELTA HALO/HIGH CHARITY

The weapon and fortress world known as Delta Halo is still intact, against the backdrop of space. The ring has a large, hive-like structure connected to its uppermost band. This is High Charity, once the Covenant home world.

EXT. DELTA HALO, CONTROL ROOM’S REAR DOCKING CACHE

A lone figure runs across the massive platform which lies at the rear of Delta Halo’s control room temple.

He is an Elite Covenant warrior and his title is THE ARBITER. His armor glimmers in the sunlight, as he races across the open platform that lines the rear entrance to the control room of Delta Halo. He sprints at a blistering pace showing no signs of slowing, even when he starts to near the edge of the platform. When he reaches the last few meters, he leaps forward into the air. His body is now in a dive, falling toward the vast body of water the lies below.

EXT. DELTA HALO, LAKE

From the distance, the Arbiter’s body penetrates the water with hardly any sound or wake. The ocean remains silent and undisturbed, as though it never happened.

EXT. DELTA HALO, CONTROL ROOM, FRONT

The control room is motionless for a second, then with the a crack of thunder an explosion of white hot light breaks the entire station apart. A cacophony echoes through the surrounding canyons, as pieces of debris rain down from the sky. Billows of smoke and rock appear where the control room once was.

EXT. DELTA HALO, NORTH LAGOON - MOMENTS LATER

A group of a dozen Brute warriors watch in the distance as the Delta Halo control room burns. Their faces are in disbelief and shock. Behind them, the lagoons calm is broken and a head emerges. It is the Arbiter. He moves without a sound, creeping and using his active camouflage behind the latter pair of enemies. With one fluid motion, he removes an energy sword from his armor. It ignites and slashes across the back of one of the two Brute’s necks. The enemy falls instantly, and within the same attack, the Arbiter slides the blade quickly into the back of the second one. He puts his foot against the impaled creature and pries him off of his weapon.

CLOSE ON FACE: His eyes are afire.

ARBITER
Bring it.

CHAPTER TITLE: “This Will Hurt You More Than It Will Hurt Me”

- Destroy the Covenant encampments throughout the valley.

- Cross the canyon’s ridge using the guarded bridge.

EXT. DELTA HALO, SCARAB PLATFORM

The Scarab platform is a makeshift station where the massive spider-like weapon vehicle can load passengers and equipment. At this moment, SERGEANT AVERY JOHNSON and COMMANDER MIRANDA KEYES, having just returned from the control room, are preparing the Scarab for departure. Sgt. Johnson is ordering various marines to weapon supplies and boxes. Cdr. Keyes approaches Sgt. Johnson with a concerned look on her face. She’s holding a glowing green piece of steel, called the Index. It is the key which activates the Halo weapons, only retrievable by humans.

KEYES
It’s been a long time. Do you think he made it?

JOHNSON
He’s a big boy. I think he can handle himself.

Sgt. Johnson notices that she has been holding the Index ever since they left the control room.

JOHNSON (CONT’D)
You alright, ma’am, you seem to be awfully close to that doodad. We heard the explosion, there’s no way they can use it now.

KEYES
I know. I feel safer with it in our possession for some strange reason.

Sgt. Johnson is cut off, by a sudden, but slight, noise that came from a structure adjacent to the platform. It sounded like a clattering of movement, behind a single doorway that lies at the far end of the platform.

JOHNSON
Look alive, marines.

All of the marines grab their weapons and scatter into guarded positions. Johnson pulls a battle rifle that has been slung over his shoulder and readies it.

JOHNSON (CONT’D)
Ma’am, you might want to head back inside the Scarab about now.

KEYES
(annoyed) And let you boys enjoy all the fun. I don’t think so.

She pockets the Index and removes to pistols from holsters on her back. After a few tense moments of silence, a small army of Brutes emerge from a doorway. They charge, several on all fours, like aggressive animals. The marines begin tossing grenades and firing, but the sheer number of them automatically push the marines into precarious defensive positions. They begin to take heavy fire and are in dire need of help.

EXT. DELTA HALO, CLIFF SIDE

The Arbiter is perched high above the platform, at the precipice of a cliff. He can clearly see the attack from above. Immediately, he is spurned into action and begins to move quickly along the cliff’s edge. As he gets to a breaking point in the rock, finding himself directly above the platform, he leaps forward.

EXT. DELTA HALO, SCARAB PLATFORM

He drops onto the platform, amidst the fury of weapon fire and as several of the marines are struck down by nearby Brutes.

JOHNSON
What took you so long?

ARBITER
Board the Scarab. I will take care of these criminals.

Sgt. Johnson and Cdr. Keyes retreat to the inside of the Scarab. More Brutes begin to pour out of the doorway and now, some begin to drop down from the surrounding cliffs and rock encroachments, just as the Arbiter, himself, had done.

CHAPTER TITLE: “It’s Raining Brutes, Hallelujah”

- Defend the Scarab from the Brute hordes.

JOHNSON (O.S.)
We’re ready to go, Arbiter! Get your ass in here!

The Arbiter and any surviving marines enter the Scarab, despite the seemingly never-ending onslaught of the Brutes.

The enemies continue to fire at the vessel in a last ditch effort to destroy the Scarab crew.

INT. SCARAB, CONTROL CORE

Sgt. Johnson and Cdr. Keyes are huddled around the controls of the Scarab. As marines tend to their wounds, they keep an eye on the Arbiter as he walks among them. They are evidently conflicted with his presence. The Arbiter approaches Sgt. Johnson as the Scarab begins to move.

JOHNSON
They’re not going to like this.

EXT. DELTA HALO, SCARAB PLATFORM

The Scarab, now active and moving, edges away from the platform, although it is still taking fire. It’s front nose, a devastating plasma cannon, turns to face the platform. The cannon heats up and then fires, unleashing hell on the Brutes who have gathered atop the platform. Under the powerful beam of plasma, the Brutes are devoured by heat and the entire structure begins to buckle. After only seconds, the platform and the building adjacent to it crumble to the ground, charred black and smoldering.

INT. SCARAB, CONTROL CORE

JOHNSON
How much does one of these things cost?

ARBITER
Where are you going?

JOHNSON
I don’t know. I thought you’d tell me, what with us needing to get to the Ark lickety split and all.

KEYES
Maybe we should ask him?

The three look at another monitor, this one is named 343 GUILTY SPARK. The sphere-encased, artificial intelligence construct is tied down by a leather belt against the inside of the Scarab’s bridge. Clearly unable to move, he has been silent up till this point. At the moment of his recognition, he begins to speak.

GUILTY SPARK
I apologize, I wish I could help you, but it appears as though the primary weapons systems of this installation have been sabotaged. My identifying correlator has indicted you (facing the Arbiter). If your purpose is to destroy our Creators' installations, I cannot assist. It is against basic protocol, as well as escalated protocol for situations that inv-

JOHNSON
Yeah, that was a mistake. Shut up, Tinker Bell.

GUILTY SPARK
As there is no purpose for my continuation, I will deactivate my main line communication momentarily. If you wish to communicate with me further, I can answer questions concerning-

Sgt. Johnson hits the monitor with the butt of his battle rifle and he becomes silent immediately.

JOHNSON
We should have left him back in the control room.

ARBITER
He may be of some use yet.

The Arbiter takes control of the Scarab.

JOHNSON
You know where you're going?

ARBITER
There. (pointing through the viewport)

Sgt. Johnson and Cdr. Keyes stare through the narrow viewport and can see the length of Delta Halo stretched out before them. The Arbiter is pointing at the Covenant city, High Charity, which is docked and affixed several kilometers down the ring.

EXT. DELTA HALO, SURFACE

The Scarab moves down the surface of Delta Halo, as Covenant dropships and vehicles approach.

INT. SCARAB, CONTROL CORE

Sgt. Johnson turns to the Arbiter, firing up a cigar as he talks.

JOHNSON
You think you can handle this?

ARBITER
With absolute certainty. (pauses)
But it’s been a while.

CHAPTER TITLE: “Vengeance Can Be Served Cold Or Super-Heated”

- Use the Scarab to eliminate the Covenant army’s onslaught.

- Climb the canyon walls and proceed to High Charity.

- Navigate through High Charity’s lower levels to the trench.

EXT. HIGH CHARITY, TRENCH

Although still day on the ring installation, the interior of High Charity is a perpetual night do to its bulwark canopy. The lights which once lit the center of the city shine upward toward the empty place where *The Perilous Adytum* was coupled. The city’s power is struggling to maintain activity, as lights flicker in the distance.

During that time, the Forerunner ship provided power to High Charity and now that it has been removed, the city is in disarray. The streets are, for the most part, empty, as was expected when the entire fleet left for Earth. The Scarab moves cautiously through the trench, which was once a main thoroughfare for large Covenant transports. It is now devoid of any noticeable activity.

JOHNSON (O.S.)
You mind telling us what we’re
doing here?

INT. SCARAB, CONTROL CORE

Sgt. Johnson and Cdr. Keyes stand behind the Arbiter, peeking through the viewport as the Scarab lumbers through the shallow trench and across the city’s landscape.

ARBITER
I made a promise to myself, that if I survived the trials of the Arbiter, I would return for a someone who, if not murdered by now, will be of assistance to us.

KEYES
They’ll have a ship?

ARBITER
Let us hope. Here, take the controls. We are near enough for me to scout the ground. Stay alert, however. Many Brutes were not brought with the fleet when they departed.

JOHNSON
Why is that?

ARBITER
Because even the Prophets won’t allow these vicious savages to participate in The Great Journey. They are unruly outlaws, ruthlessly violent. I will be back momentarily. Remain alive, humans.

The Arbiter leaves the Scarab through the rear entry hatch. Sgt. Johnson and Cdr. Keyes exchange a wary glance.

EXT. HIGH CHARITY, TRENCH

The Arbiter leaps from the back of the Scarab and drops to the ground. He hits the rock floor silently and moves into the shadows of the nearby trench wall. The trench floor is quiet and uneasy. The Arbiter darts toward an opening in the wall and proceeds into the city.

EXT. HIGH CHARITY, DARK ALLEY

The street lights flicker as the Arbiter walks from the inner recesses of a dark alley and onto a narrow avenue. He has a Covenant Carbine with him and begins to load it.

Chapter Title: “Ghost Town With Neon Lights”

- Travel to High Charity’s sprawl and enter the citadel.

- Secure the citadel’s ground floor and access the communication bunker.

INT. HIGH CHARITY, CITADEL, COMMUNICATION BUNKER

The Arbiter walks with a steady gait into the eclipsing darkness of the communication bunker. He tucks away his weapon and reaches behind his armor for the energy sword. It ignites, creating a hollow-white glow. He continues his trek silently into the rear quarters.

This communication bunker once acted as a relay center by the Elite Honor Guard, but now it was worn and tattered from vandalism. More than likely, during the civil unrest of the city, the Brute clans had sieged the citadel and stole the precious equipment, while destroying what they could not take.

In the darkness, the Arbiter hears the sound of someone in the shadows.

INT. HIGH CHARITY, CITADEL, REAR QUARTERS

The lack of light conceals the young body of an aggressive warrior. He stays deep within the shadows, and remains quiet while his prey approaches. Only glimmer from his eyes can be seen, against the black shadows.

INT. HIGH CHARITY, CITADEL, REAR QUARTERS

The Arbiter, seemingly ignoring the sound of movement, walks into the rear quarters through an open doorway. He moves onto and looks out from a balcony above the citadel’s entrance.

The view from here stretches for a hundred kilometers. High Charity appears to be empty and silent, even dead to the hum of routing generators that would have been directly tethered to *The Perilous Adytum*.

He can see the trench several kilometers to the right of his position, and the Scarab that awaits him.

Without a moments notice, the shadow emerges and a raises a demon shaker to the head of the Arbiter. He drops his energy blade.

SHADOW
Do not move or I will send you into the eternal. Drop your weapon and turn around.

The Arbiter is taken off guard, but for some reason he recognizes the voice.

ARBITER
I will move slowly, young one.

SHADOW
Be very slow.

The Arbiter finally faces the shadow directly, now seeing the being. He is a young Elite soldier, half the Arbiter’s age. He has the mark of a NEOPHYTE, a rank within the Covenant caste of servitude. This hierarchal level shows that he is almost ready to serve in live combat. When the Arbiter reveals his face, the young Elite backs down and kneels before him.

NEOPHYTE
I did not know that you were an Arbiter. I beg your forgiveness, esteemed warrior.

ARBITER
Has it been so long? (pauses) Rise.

With that, the Neophyte recognizes that the Elite in front of him is more than simply an Arbiter. He is also something else of personal significance. He stands up carefully, carefully examining the Arbiter’s face.

NEOPHYTE
Too long perhaps.

ARBITER
You have the rank of Neophyte.

NEOPHYTE
It is the name I go by now.

ARBITER
May I still call you son?

NEOPHYTE
Yes, father. Fables of your death at the hand of the Brute chieftain were widely spread. I have heard many words of heresy concerning you. As you can see, (turning to the balcony) we are on the brink of extinction.

ARBITER
Their stories were lies. The chieftain lives no more, yet I remain.

NEOPHYTE
What are you doing here? Why did you return?

ARBITER
I returned for you. You and a ship. We need to get to the a place called the Ark. There will be time for explanation later-

Just in that moment, a large explosion occurs at the trench and the two look. The Scarab is heaved from it’s perch and dropped onto its side. Two Phantoms, with outlaw markings, drop from the sky and a pair of Shadows close in on the fallen Scarab. They appeared without warning and sieged the Scarab. Brute outlaws emerge from their vessels, weapons drawn.

ARBITER (CONT’D)
I must go, but we first need to get to the humans.

NEOPHYTE
And why is this? They are of no use to us, are they?

ARBITER
They have come with me this far and our fates are now intertwined.

NEOPHYTE
Very well. Let us move quickly. We have transportation in the galley.

EXT. HIGH CHARITY, CITADEL, GALLEY

The two emerge from the citadel’s rear entry and out onto the galley, a parkade.

The sides of the open area contained stalls which housed individual Covenant vehicles. There is a single Wraith, a Spectre and a pair of Ghosts. Neophyte selects a vehicle and barrels through a large gate straight ahead. He drops directly into the trench.

CHAPTER TITLE: “Like Father, Like Son”

EXT. HIGH CHARITY, TRENCH

- Shoot down the trench line and take out enemies along the way.

- Rescue the humans pinned down behind the Scarab.

EXT. HIGH CHARITY, TRENCH, FALLEN SCARAB

The remaining humans, the Arbiter and Neophyte move about the bodies of the dead Brutes, picking up weapons and salvaging necessities.

JOHNSON
Nice of you to join us. Who is he?

ARBITER
He is my son. (turns to Neophyte) How can we go about getting out of here?

NEOPHYTE
There is a vehicle paddock by the conduit bay. There should be several SlipSpace-fitted transportation.

ARBITER
Very well, let us go there.

NEOPHYTE
There is one problem.

ARBITER
Outlaws?

NEOPHYTE
No. (pauses) The Flood.

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

EXT. ANTARCTICA, GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Cephaus is guided by Monitor 01 into the depths of the ground. They reach an elevator and begin dropping down.

MONITOR 01
This station was created to be self-sufficient and to remain hidden below this planet’s surface indefinitely. It has remained as such for thousands of years. The cloaking field protects sub-sonar waves that ensure that any prying eyes will believe this place to be a normal mineral formation. (pauses) We are now reaching a two hundred meters. Note that your organic mass remains intact, despite depth. This can be perorated further, but suffice to say, it is allowed by an alternate gravitational pull, reversed against the planet’s natural forces-

CEPHAUS
Remain silent, Monitor. I tire of school lessons. Let us complete the task I have been required to.

MONITOR 01
Certainly. First, we must pass your body through the terrace corridor. Please hold onto the wall cavity, as the gravity transition may be uncomfortable.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, TERRACE CORRIDOR

They finally reach the lowest depth of the elevator and a doorway opens. It however, does not open against the floor, but rather against the ceiling of the elevator capsule. Cephaus stands by the wall and grabs tightly against cable in the wall. Suddenly, gravity’s pull is reversed and in a mere second, Cephaus stands on the ceiling of the elevator capsule and steps outside the doorway.

Cephaus walks out of the shaft and into a long corridor. The terrace corridor has large windows that look out onto vast landscape held under a canopy of rock and metal. There are lights glaring over various sections of these peculiar fields.

There are literally millions of pockets that run along the ground, spreading across the far-reaching flat lands and hillsides. Cephaus looks closely at them, but pays no immediate attention.

He continues down the lengthy corridor until they reach the end. Here, he finds the control room of Installation 01.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONTROL ROOM

MONITOR 01
Welcome to the Ark, Creator. Would you like to start the weapon activation protocol immediately?

Cephaus turns toward a large view-station which projects a holographic layout of the planet’s surface. The *Cessation* was still experiencing the throws of the battle within. Suddenly, the rear hull is severed completely from the bow and front compartments. The entire section detaches and it the remaining, operable part dives into the planet’s upper atmosphere, burning up upon entry. This portion of *Cessation* begins heading toward the visual lines demarcating the location of the installation. Cephaus breathes one last shallow breath and then speaks.

EXT. PLAINS OF ANDUU, VILLAGE

A brief flash of fire, as the Flood siege villages within the plains of Anduu.

CEPHAUS (O.S.)
Fire at will.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONTROL ROOM

CLOSE ON FACE: Cephaus’ eyes are moist. The ground and room begin to shake violently, but he remains still and silent.

CLOSE ON HAND: Cephaus’ hand forms a tight fist. The sinews of his muscles become taut as everything trembles under the power of the station.

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

CAMPAIGN MISSION - AMBUSH

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, EN ROUTE TO BRAVO COMPANY

Flying high above the desolate and barren landscape of New Mombasa, the Pelican jettisons toward the salvagable end of the city. Despite the majority of it being obliterated by the Prophet of Regret’s hasty departure, some remnants along the coastline are still intact. The war there still rages on.

INT. PELICAN, REAR CARGO HOLD

The Master Chief is standing toward the back, near the light anti-aircraft gun that hangs just inside the doorway. The other marines are sitting down, some still staring at him. He is looking toward *The Perilous Adytum*, which gets smaller and smaller in the distance.

MASTER CHIEF
How long will it take to get the nuke fitted for departure?

OUTLAW
I don’t know. It’s coming from Bravo Company and we’ve had very little communication since the initial invasion.

Suddenly, the normal turbine sound of the Pelican flying is interrupted by the sound of gun fire, both human and Covenant.

INT. PELICAN, COCKPIT

Through the viewport, there is an outlying valley below, where the sand and debris has been slung against buildings and structures. The devastation had created a ravine which, evidently, was being used as a road. A group of six marines are pinned down against the smoldering remains of a Warthog. Nearly twenty Elites are taking distanced pot shots at the humans.

The Master Chief moves to the front of the Pelican.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, RAVINE

The marines scramble to maintain some semblance of control, but it is obvious that the Elites are simply toying with them. One of the marines is startled by the splintering Warthog and attempts to make a run for it.

He is gunned down with a single shot to the head, the helmet twirling in the sand as his body drops.

INT. PELICAN, COCKPIT

The Master Chief does not hesitate.

MASTER CHIEF
Circle back and come in low. (turns to lieutenant) What weapons do you have?

Lt. Outlaw moves quickly to the back and returns with a anti-aircraft rocket launcher.

OUTLAW
Will this work?

MASTER CHIEF
It should do the trick. (turns to pilot as he heads toward the rear hold) Pull up when I've dropped and then come back around. This shouldn't take long.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, RAVINE

The Pelican swoops in low and a wake of dust is flung into the air. The Master Chief hangs onto the rear and in one fluid movement, he leaps from the craft and comes crashing to the ground. He lands in an agile stance and spins around, facing the ambush.

CHAPTER TITLE: "Pick On Someone Your Own Size"

- Eliminate the immediate Elite threat.

- Halt the continuing waves of Covenant into the valley's mouth.

Despite the Master Chief's brazen control of the ravine, a single Jackal gets into position at a covered point and fires his beam rifle at the Pelican's canvas fuselage. It ignites immediately and the explosion sends the Pelican reeling through the air. It crashes violently on the ravine floor and slides across it, tumbling as it comes to a halt.

The Master Chief hurls a single plasma grenade across the valley and it clings it the Jackal's face in one toss. The alien's lifeless body is thrown into the air with the explosion.

The Master Chief hurries to the wreckage and determines immediately that most of the crew are dead. There are a few marines who are still alive, including Lt. Outlaw.

MASTER CHIEF
Can you walk?

OUTLAW
I believe so. (looks around)

The surviving marines, led by the Master Chief, get ready to venture through the remainder of the ravine. The Master Chief walks by the charred body of the Jackal he stuck and pries the beam rifle from his hands.

MASTER CHIEF
I’m going to take the high road.
Stay alert. I’ll keep you covered.

He points toward a cleft runs along the lip of the ravine.

OUTLAW
Bravo Company is just past the
seawall.

Lt. Outlaw points to the massive seawall that lines the Indian Ocean and runs on the east side of New Mombasa. The sea wall connects to the valley that they are currently in, and runs north toward Bravo Company’s encampment. The Master Chief climbs a nearby rock and lifts himself onto the ledge.

MASTER CHIEF
Let’s go.

CHAPTER TITLE: “I Will Snipe For A Quarters”

- Protect the marines from Covenant patrols and encampments.

- Clear out the ridge line for safe passage to the sea wall.

- Lead the marines down the sea wall toward Bravo Company.

CAMPAIGN MISSION - GRAVEYARD

The Master Chief and the marines find their way to the end of the sea wall and leap down. Ahead is a graveyard of skyscrapers and high-risers. The large buildings of New Mombasa are now buried and broken, some on their sides, but most jutting out at odd and violent angles. It is clear that this one section took the brunt of the devastation, when the Prophet of Regret’s ship tore a SlipSpace hole while still inside the city.

Fortunately, at the edge of the debris field is an overturned Gauss Warthog is still intact. The Master Chief walks toward it and flips it up into the air, allowing it to gently land on its wheels.

OUTLAW
It looks good. Drive or gun?

CHAPTER TITLE: “Ride Out”

- Pass through the debris field and eliminate the Covenant scouts.

- Break the blockade at the city’s entrance.

- Crush the Covenant armament and reach Bravo Company.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, BRAVO COMPANY

The Master Chief and the remaining marines arrive at Bravo Company’s headquarters. The operations tent is hidden in a dark alley between two buildings. While the others mend to their injuries, the Master Chief and Lt. Outlaw proceed to the tent and find MAJOR JAMES DRAKE. He is a battle-hardened officer, clearly exhausted and strained. His face looks tense and burdened, as though he has not slept for days. He turns to face the Master Chief.

DRAKE
A Spartan. I didn’t think any of your kind survived the attack on Reach.

MASTER CHIEF
Pardon my urgency, sir. We need your help.

Maj. Drake looks cautiously at the two, but is interrupted. The radio chirps and a familiar voice is heard over the intercom. They turn their attention to the holographic projection of Fleet Admiral Lord Hood on the communicaiton transponder.

LORD HOOD
Attention, Bravo Company Command.

DRAKE
Yes, sir. This is Major Drake, stationed at Sector 3-7. How can I be of assistance to you?

LORD HOOD
I have a Spartan and a unit of marines en route to your position. They need your nuclear ordinance and they have authorization via FLEETCOM to procure it and bring it south, toward the city’s center.

DRAKE
The good news is that they’re here, the bad new is that the item, however, is not. We deposited it at Sector 8-2, in a utility truck just south of the harbour. We were planning on arming it behind the invasion, per protocol 85-A-WHITCOMB. About an hour ago, the Covenant tore through our lines and we lost communication with the marines manning the nuke. We believe they’re still alive, but our communications were disabled. I was just about to dispatch recon.

LORD HOOD
Hold those orders, Major. I think the Chief can handle this. Give him a dozen of your best shock troopers and directions. He’ll get your weapon back.

DRAKE
Yes, sir. It will be done. I’ll call out my best men.

LORD HOOD
Master Chief, the ball is in your court now. Hood, over and out.

The holographic projection salutes and then fades away.

DRAKE
(to a nearby soldier) PFC Carver, get my BR55. Tell Captain Krueger, he will have command of Bravo Company until I return.

CARVER
Yes, sir.

OUTLAW
Sir, you’re coming with us?

DRAKE
Absolutely. You’re going to need the best help you can get and these are my boys out their on the other side of those damn bugs. I was planning on leading the group myself, before you guys showed up. At least now we’ll have a tank with us... (stares at the Master Chief)

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

INT. HIGH CHARITY, CENTRAL ASCENDANCY MAIN

Although it is pitch black, the familiar voice of CORTANA, once the companion AI of the Master Chief, can be heard.

CORTANA
Interesting. It seems you got your wish, the weapon systems on Delta Halo are currently offline. There was a blast in the forward aural chamber. The systems... they’re completely down.

She is communicating with someone, but there is no response. A low, dense sound is in the background and a flicker of light quickly reveals her holographic figure and that she is still intact, within High Charity’s computer systems.

CORTANA (CONT’D)
Before *The Perilous Adytum* left, I took something very important from it. Something that will ensure our future.

Another flicker shows the blue-lit silhouette of Cortana, and large tentacles moving eerily about her.

CORTANA (CONT’D)
I knew there was something intrinsically wrong with me when I entered its network. It was made by the same ones who made you. I felt, for a moment, something unique and powerful. You know the location of the final piece and with it, I can end this chaos.

Another flicker shows the behemoth plant-like creature facing Cortana’s hologram. The creature’s name is GRAVEMIND.

GRAVEMIND
The time is short, the hour is near. (pauses) Care, a task with you I send; fair, the god’s tool you will rend. Silent, now they come. Prepare, being of fire and light. (pauses) Immortality awaits.

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

CAMPAIGN MISSION: CONDUIT BAY

EXT. HIGH CHARITY, CONDUIT BAY, PADDOCK PERIMETER

The hybrid group of humans and Covenant stand atop a ridge in the rocky landscape of High Charity’s eighth district, an upper echelon structure. The conduit bay serves as a space port for non-sanctioned Covenant transports. The rebellious markings and graffiti that cover its outer walls indicate that it still operates in the same function. It did, at least, until the Flood parasite arrived.

ARBITER
How long have they been here?

NEOPHYTE
Since the humans parked their ship here.

He pointed toward *In Amber Clad*, which had crashed into the canopy several kilometers away. The ship is still smoldering from the collision. They turn their attention to Cdr. Keyes, who shrugs.

KEYES
Don’t look at me. I wasn’t driving.

They turn their attention back to the conduit bay. The bay itself is a massive crescent cleft cut deep into the city’s landscape. Like a traditional space port, ships have docked, their hulls hovering over an abyss, but connecting to individual docking stations that extend out from the bay. There are fueling links and a variety of cargo platforms, but as a whole, the bay is strangely quiet. It is clear, from the yellow vines and putrid stench that parasite is infesting this place.

After a few moments of scouring the place from afar, the light system fails. A dim flicker remains, as the conduit bay is plunged into darkness.

JOHNSON
Great, I didn’t bring my flashlight. (pauses) Let’s do this.

CHAPTER TITLE: “Thank You For Leaving The Lights On”

- Round the bay’s perimeter and find a way in.

- Enter the porting dock and pass the terminal without infection.

EXT. HIGH CHARITY, CONDUIT BAY, VEHICLE PADDOCK

When the group finally reaches the main floor of the conduit bay, a new Flood form awaits them. This creature is known as MALOCANTH PREFECT, and is a giant, vicious biped that has infected another, unrevealed Covenant race.

- Eliminate the new Flood form.

Despite all attempts at success by the Arbiter, the creature impairs the entire group. As the Arbiter is pinned down by this beast, a group of Elites arrive at that very moment. The group is led by the SPEC-OPS COMMANDER, with his familiar severed mandible. The group contains half a dozen other Elite soldiers wearing the black special operations armor. They attack the Malocanth Prefect with ruthless efficiency and eliminate it quickly with their combined efforts, forcing it off of the edge of the landing platform.

ARBITER
I thought you were dead.

COMMANDER
And let you have all of the fun? We have not slain a Malocanth Prefect in many cycles. It was deeply satisfying.

They nod to each other.

ARBITER
We have little time, Commander. We are on our way to the Ark to end this war once and for all. Do you wish to come with us?

COMMANDER
Will we have a chance to kill Brutes?

ARBITER
Possibly.

COMMANDER
Very well, but there is one thing we should let you know...

The Commander nods to the furthest Elite warrior in his entourage. The Elite moves and pulls a frail being from behind the rubble. He is the PROPHET OF MERCY, one of the three hierarchs of the Covenant leadership. He is the oldest, and without his hovering chair it is evident he is feeble and weak. The prophet is shaking and cowering, but is completely silent. He walks, slowly, out into the open.

COMMANDER (CONT'D)
He has not said a single word since we found him on an exterior bay outside of the Council Chamber. We have only taken him this far for consideration of barter if needed. Should we bring him?

ARBITER
(considers) For the now, yes.

The newly formed group walks toward a nearby ship. Sgt. Johnson, who is holding a satchel with Guilty Spark in his hand, walks alongside the Spec-Ops Commander they exchange nods. The group reaches the nearby ship and prepare to board.

JOHNSON
(turns to Arbiter) I've never seen that Flood type before.

NEOPHYTE
That's because you know not of the Drinol.

ARBITER
(looking at a ship) Ah, I didn't expect to find this here.

NEOPHYTE
The *Subjugated Phoenix*. The very ship you used during the Purgation Conflict.

The Covenant ship, *Subjugated Phoenix*, is jet black with fierce purple stripes that spread across port-side hull. The vehicle looks fast an lean.

Suddenly, a female voice booms from the terminal, surprising everyone.

FEMALE VOICE
Aren’t you forgetting something?

The voice echoes from the terminal’s mainframe. Suddenly, on a service pedestal at the edge of the main floor, a blue holographic image appears. It is Cortana.

KEYES
Cortana? What are you doing here?

CLOSE ON FACE: Cortana gives the usual sarcastic smirk.

CORTANA
Looking for a ride.

EXT. HIGH CHARITY, CONDUIT BAY, VEHICLE PADDOCK

Subjugated Phoenix rises from its service paddock and banks hard toward the city’s skyline. It accelerates over the dark landscape.

INT. *SUBJUGATED PHOENIX*, BRIDGE

Everyone has settled into their places and Cortana appears as a holographic projection from a node in Cdr. Keyes’ hand. She looks from Keyes to Johnson.

CORTANA
It’s good to see you two again.

JOHNSON
Pleasures mine, ma’am.

KEYES
Where’s the Master Chief?

CORTANA
On his way to Earth. He’s trying to stop the Prophet of Truth. Where are we going?

She is answered by silence as every turns their attention to the viewport. The rapid sound of plasma fire is heard. It is the sound of a Covenant fighter, a Seraph.

CAMPAIGN MISSION: ESCAPE

Everyone stares through the viewport as they race above High Charity's surface. Several brightly colored Seraphs dart upward across the viewport. There's a loud cracking sound of hot energy bolts slamming against the hull. A klaxon blares and a red light flashes.

KEYES
Can't we engage SlipSpace now, like Regret did on Earth?

COMMANDER
Not within the city, we'd never make it through the debris field. Our architecture has ensured this much. They don't want us to leave the city, so they're blocking the exit.

ARBITER
We have to fight them.

COMMANDER
Primary bow-cannons are ready to fire. Secondary homing mortars are online. Arbiter, do you want these controls.

ARBITER
This will be pleasurable. (taking the controls)

CHAPTER TITLE: "Skeet Ball And Things Like That"

Campaign Note: During cooperative play, this sequence would allow the two parties to choose between flying the Subjugated Phoenix or a Seraph escort.

- Pilot the vehicle across the lower district.

- Destroy the blockade and exit the city.

EXT. OUTER SPACE, OUTSIDE HIGH CHARITY

Subjugated Phoenix breaks free from the city's canopy bulwark and dives forward into the darkness of space.

INT. *SUBJUGATED PHOENIX*, BRIDGE

The Arbiter eases back from the controls.

ARBITER
Easy enough.

COMMANDER
I sense this is only the beginning of our troubles.

EXT. OUTER SPACE

As the seam in space and time opens, pulling *Subjugated Phoenix* inside, a Covenant frigate, covertly follows. It enters just behind them.

EXT. OUTER SPACE, OUTSIDE THE SUBJUGATED PHOENIX

Subjugated Phoenix emerges from a SlipSpace seam into open outer space.

PAN RIGHT

NEOPHYTE (O.S.)
So, this is the Ark?

GUILTY SPARK (O.S.)
That is correct.

The large blue-green planet of Earth comes into view.

INT. *SUBJUGATED PHOENIX*, BRIDGE

Sgt. Johnson has been holding Guilty Spark tightly throughout their voyage so far. The satchel, which contained the monitor, was tied but is now being slowly loosened. A red light appears and a similar humming emerges from the satchel. Guilty Spark emerges.

GUILTY SPARK
Ah, yes. Installation 01. The Ark.

JOHNSON
I almost forgot he was with us...
Here comes the history lesson.

GUILTY SPARK
Your sarcasm is vestigial, Reclaimer. But if you must know, the Ark is the first installation in the weapon network. I can run protocol on its systems as soon as we get closer, would you like access to-

COMMANDER
Are all Oracles as deafening as this one, Arbiter?

ARBITER
They are not known for their silence. Oracle, tell us the location of the Ark’s entrance?

GUILTY SPARK
There.

A hologram appears of the Earth, showing the space station and ships that surround it. A waypoint marker appears in the southern hemisphere of the planet.

GUILTY SPARK (CONT’D)
It is located at section two-five-eight-six-one, in the lateral-dissension parameter.

KEYES
(looking at the map) That’s Antarctica.

COMMANDER
It looks like your ‘Ark’ resides below the surface, several kilometers.

ARBITER
Then we will go to this ‘Antarctica.’

JOHNSON
(looks at Keyes) You’re going to want to get on the horn and tell our boys at Cairo, we’re the good guys. Otherwise, this could be a very short trip.

KEYES
You guys have a phone I can use?

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

EXT. EARTH

The brilliant-colored sphere of Earth appears against the backdrop of stars. But instead of stations and ships, the space is empty. There is no human or Covenant fleet or technology of any type which is noticeable.

SUBTITLE:

THE ARK. 117,649 YEARS EARLIER.

EXT. ANTARCTICA, OUTSIDE CAVERN

MONITOR 01 (O.S.)
Would you like me to prepare for you the carbon-sustainment hollow?

INT. INSTALLATION 01, TERRACE CORRIDOR

CEPHAUS
Not as of yet, Monitor. I wish to explore more of this facility.

MONITOR 01
Have you ever been to an installation before, Creator?

CEPHAUS
No, but I am familiar as it is my duty.

Side-by-side, they pass into the familiar terrace corridor. The corridor looks out upon a vast enclosed sections. There appears to be various types of flora covering the seemingly never-ending stretches of land. He once again notices pockets and divots in the ground, some of them have budding spores. Cephaus’ face looks concerned.

CEPHAUS (CONT’D)
I recognize those. It looks familiar. All of this looks familiar.

MONITOR 01
You seem amazed by it, as though this is the first time you've seen such a thing.

CEPHAUS
What is it?

MONITOR 01
Why, this is the 'Field of Internment.' Our quarantine zone.

CEPHAUS
What does it inter?

MONITOR 01
Well, of course, you are testing me now. I am thrilled to take part in this exam and I will proudly perform-

CEPHAUS
This is no test, monitor. What lies out there on the fields?

MONITOR 01
The Flood. This is where we harvest the parasite.

Cephaus stands momentarily, his face is frozen.

CEPHAUS
Harvest the parasite? What do you mean?

MONITOR 01
This is where we grow and contain the Flood.

CEPHAUS
Within the weapons? You are lying, petulant machine. Tell me the truth!

Cephaus is angry, violently so. He grabs the construct out of the air and yanks him to within centimeters of his face.

CLOSE ON FACE: Cephaus' anger overcomes any other emotions he could be capable of at this time. He is enraged.

MONITOR 01
Caution, Creator. I’ve been given orders for your termination if you were to become unruly.

In this moment, five Sentinel Majors appear from an aperture in the upper-section of the corridor. They hover down to Cephaus’ level, showing threat of force. Cephaus immediately responds by throwing Monitor 01 into the nearest one’s eye, causing it to reel backwards and explode. He reaches for his Scepter of Anduu and leaps atop the next one, severing both arms and then it’s flight mechanism, causing it to fall to the ground. Atop the falling Sentinel, he flings his scepter at the furthest enemy, splitting it’s body completely open and in the same motion, removes both chalices from his rear holsters and fires direct hits on the two remaining ones. All of the Sentinels fall to the ground, rolling to a stop in billows of smoke and sparks. He lands, still atop the crushed Sentinel, and returns his chalices to their place.

MONITOR 01 (CONT’D)
(moans) Creator, you must not resist.

The Monitor 01 is pinned underneath the first Sentinel Major, squirming to be removed. Cephaus, slowly and methodically steps from atop his second prey and walks toward his third, removing his scepter from the crushed shell of his enemy. He sheathes it and moves next to Monitor 01. Grabbing the monitor from the pile of rubble.

CEPHAUS
Caution, Monitor. I need not orders for your termination and I will not hesitate to execute the fury of my will. Send ten thousand Sentinels and I will crush every single one. If permanence is what you seek, then cooperation is your only option. What shall it be?

MONITOR 01
Very well, Creator. I concede this point, per the previous scenario.

CEPHAUS
I want answers.

MONITOR 01
Ask.

CEPHAUS
Who did this? Who would contain the Flood in the very weapon designed to kill them?

MONITOR 01
Why, the architect would.

CEPHAUS
Who designed it, Monitor?

MONITOR 01
That information is restricted, even for me.

CEPHAUS
What is the purpose of this installation?

MONITOR 01
To study and contain the Flood and in the event that the Flood would escape, to be used as a last resort.

CEPHAUS
Has this ring ever been used before?

MONITOR 01
Yes.

CEPHAUS
By whom?

MONITOR 01
By the progeny of the architect, I assume. It was important to my programmer that I was not aware of their intentions, but that I executed them with precise exactitude.

CEPHAUS
Why would they harvest Flood on a weapon that was meant to kill them? Were they working on a cure?

MONITOR 01
Negative. They studied containment, genetic potential and the ability of the contagions to spread within a given population, during any weather constraint. Quite the opposite. They wanted the parasite to be strong, incurable.

CEPHAUS
Were they responsible for the release of the Flood?

MONITOR 01
I cannot answer that question, it is not within my programming parameters.

CEPHAUS
Who created the Flood?

MONITOR 01
The creators of this ring.

Cephaus cannot believe what he is hearing. For him, it was unthinkable. And now, after billions of lives have been extinguished, he is realizing that there was more to his mission than he was being told. He is shaken and distraught.

He releases Monitor 01 and falls to the floor in anguish.

MONITOR 01 (CONT'D)
In the event that you were aggressive, I was programmed to execute your termination. I can no longer do this.

CEPHAUS
Then perhaps you should kill me, fiend? (intense)

MONITOR 01
I have calculated the likelihood of your previous proposition, and while I expect that you would become worn and tired, there is a 99.989 probability that you would destroy this stations interior defense and eventually, myself. This being the case, I would prefer servitude rather than death.
(MORE)

MONITOR 01(CONT'D)
My programming is at your disposal, as is the programming of all six other installations and their individual monitors.

Cephaus stands, hiding his grief for a moment.

CEPHAUS
From henceforth, you will be known as ‘Shameful Anomaly,’ for you are an aberration of hope and because I have been forever deceived. Your fellow constructs will follow suit with these orders.

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
And what is your command, Creator?

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

CAMPAIGN MISSION: DISTRICT

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, UGANDA DISTRICT, WEST BUILDING

The sun is setting on the coastline of the city and the marines below are fighting for their lives. In the center of a three-way intersection, amongst the behemoth skyscrapers of the Uganda District, the five marines are on the verge of collapse, holed down behind two vehicles in the middle of a three-way intersection.

Covenant forces, Elites, Grunts and Jackals, from the original invasion force led by the Prophet of Regret, are the attackers. They have surrounded the marines are apparently are aware that the cargo in the vehicle behind them is of great significance, as they are firing cautiously. It is an armored utility truck, which contains the nuclear bomb. The Covenant and the marines are cautious about the battle, but it is evident that this shoot out has been going on for a long time.

MASTER CHIEF (O.S.)
The ordnance is in the truck at their six?

The Master Chief, Maj. Drake, Lt. Outlaw and a dozen ORBITAL DROP SHOCK TROOPERS are atop a small building, staring across the landscape toward the intersection.

DRAKE
Yes.

MASTER CHIEF (O.S)
Sir, take six of these men and go back around the south building. Come up behind the Covenant there. Lieutenant, do the same on the opposite side. Both of you will be able to flank the Covenant from their sides and I circle behind them.

MASTER CHIEF (CONT'D)
Do not fire until I give you radio communication.

DRAKE
Ten-four.

OUTLAW
I copy.

DRAKE
You heard the chief, fall out men. (turns to the Master Chief) Good luck.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, UGANDA DISTRICT, STREET WEST

The Master Chief leans his back against a wall, concealing his presence. The Covenant, although great tacticians in battle, have worked themselves into a hole. They are also positioned behind vehicles and buildings, taking careful shots at the human enemies. The Master Chief peeks from behind the corner and gets a visual confirmation from Maj. Drake and his men. He nods once.

MASTER CHIEF
Lieutenant, do you copy?

OUTLAW
We're in position, Chief.

MASTER CHIEF
Gentlemen, fire at will.

CHAPTER TITLE: "Hey, I'm Right Behind You"

- Eliminate the Covenant forces in the intersection.

- Defend the ordnance from the waves of Covenant reinforcements.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, UGANDA DISTRICT, INTERSECTION

DRAKE
That it?

OUTLAW
I think so.

DRAKE
Are you alright, marines?

MARINE 1
Never been more happy to see an officer, sir.

MARINE 2
Is that a Spartan?

MASTER CHIEF
We should round up the Warthogs and escort the weapon back to base. Night is coming and there isn’t much time.

DRAKE
Agreed. Men, move out.

CHAPTER TITLE: “You Remember This?”

- Escort the ordnance from the Uganda District to the main thoroughfare.

- Protect the caravan as it travels along the thoroughfare.

- Safely deliver ordinance to Bravo Company headquarters.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, BRAVO COMPANY

The Warthogs pull up to the main tent at Bravo Company’s base of operations. The vehicles are unloaded and the Master Chief goes to the utility truck to inspect the nuclear weapon. Maj. Drake and Sgt. Outlaw show up shortly after. Drake goes to the radio, attempting to contact Cairo Station’s control center.

DRAKE
This is Bravo Company, requesting to speak with Fleet Admiral Lord Hood. (turns to the Chief who is still staring at the weapon) What are you thinking?

MASTER CHIEF
For it to be effective, we may need to bring it into the ship.

DRAKE
That’s going to be difficult.

OUTLAW
Can’t we just fly in there, and drop the bomb on them?

Lord Hood appears as a holographic image again, in the midst of the three solders.

LORD HOOD
No, lieutenant. This ship predates the Covenant. It predates everything. ONI has advised detonating a nuclear weapon outside the ship may impair its systems and slow it down, but it’s not a guarantee. Our best bet is to personally deliver it to the Covenant and detonate it inside the ship.

The Master Chief and Lt. Outlaw walk into the small communications tent to listen.

DRAKE
I hope you don’t mind me asking, Admiral, but what the hell is the ship doing there.

LORD HOOD
The Prophet Regret’s invasion force failed and was forced to leave in a hurry. While they were here, they located the coordinates of seven independent weapons, one of which the Master Chief has already personally destroyed. That one, they found by happenstance. By chance.

INTERCUT: The explosion that destroyed Installation 04, ripping the ring apart in different directions.

OUTLAW (O.S.)
Halo?

LORD HOOD
Yes. They’re weapons capable of firing great distances, killing all sentient life within their range. From the pieces of information we’ve recovered, there were seven of them in total, one central ring and six outer bands.

DRAKE
But why are they here on Earth?

INTERCUT: The New Mombasa wasteland from a distance, with the spiralling Forerunner ship.

LORD HOOD (O.S.)
This information has been declassified for you three only, as it is significant for mission success. For five hundred years, the world’s leading governments have known about this secret. Below the Earth’s surface there is a ‘mineral belt,’ identical to the shape and curvature of our planet. The belt stretches across the entire planet in a longitudinal direction, like a ring.

INT. CAIRO STATION, COMMAND CENTER

Cairo Station, the Fleet Admiral stands near a large viewport staring out toward Earth. His voice is somber and honest.

LORD HOOD
It runs directly across both poles and underneath New Mombasa. None of our scientists could determine what it was until we stumbled upon Halo. Until the Master Chief and Cortana uncovered the true purpose of the rings. We believe that this is the central installation; we believe it is another Halo.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, BRAVO COMPANY

MASTER CHIEF
And the Covenant are trying to unlock it, so they can use the ring?

LORD HOOD
They apparently believe that when all the rings are engaged and fired, they will be transported into some spiritual afterlife.

MASTER CHIEF
They call it ‘The Great Journey.’

LORD HOOD
Our engineers have been doing the math and watching the site very closely. They believe you have six hours, give or take. We need you to get all available forces and route them directly to that site. Siege the Covenant encampment and plant the nuclear weapon inside the base of the ship. Once it is activated, you will have a short, but sufficient time to evacuate your troops. We will then detonate it and end this, once and for all. I’ll contact you when you’ve reached the site. Over and out.

The three men exchange wary glances, but no words are uttered.

CAMPAIGN MISSION: FINAL ASSAULT

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, SKY, FIVE KLICKS SOUTHWEST OF SHIP

The Master Chief is standing near the rear cargo hold door of a Pelican which is en route to the site.

PULL BACK: Reveals that this Pelican is one of hundreds, flying across the now barren wasteland that is what remains of New Mombasa. The dropships blaze through the dawn sky, as the sunrise begins to turn everything into an orange hue.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, RENDEZVOUS POINT

The Pelican dropships begin making their descent. They drop to an area secluded by large sand dunes and debris. All of the Pelicans touch ground and marines pour out. They gather to one location, waiting for their orders. Maj. Drake makes his way to the very center, where the communication equipment has been setup.

DRAKE
Fleet Admiral Lord Terrence Hood has commissioned this strike. It will be the largest ground offensive against the Covenant in the history of the war and for this reason, he wishes to speak to all of you.

From the communication transponder the flickering image of the Fleet Admiral appears in front everyone.

INT. CAIRO STATION, COMMAND CENTER

Lord Hood paces calmly in the command center of Cairo Station.

LORD HOOD
Men and women of the United Earth Space Corps and the United Nations Space Command, today is your day of truth and honor. Today, for some of you, will be your last day. Our way of life has been pushed toward the brink of extinction, and to our very own home: Earth. It has become abundantly clear after the invasion began, that if we do not attack and win soon, there will be nothing left to fight for as the Covenant make active practice of glassing entire systems.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, RENDEZVOUS POINT

PANS: Across the faces of all the marines, shock troopers, officers and various other personnel who are there. They are concerned.

LORD HOOD
In all of the ages of human history, there has never been a more important battle. The lives of our kind hang in the balance today. If we fail, we will lose everything. But if we win, we will deal them a blow from which they cannot recover and we will all be legends.

INT. CAIRO STATION, COMMAND CENTER

LORD HOOD
Today will go down in history one way or another. No man or woman on Earth envies the struggle you will face in this battle or the burden of its significance, but let me make one thing clear. Let it be their extinction recorded in our history books, instead of ours in theirs. It can be done, and today it will be done. Are you with me, marines?

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, RENDEZVOUS POINT

The marines yell out their agreement with a feverish excitement and all in one accord. The impact of the speech is seen on all of their faces and demeanor. They are ready for battle.

LORD HOOD
Godspeed, men. Our victory draweth nigh.

The image fades away and Lt. Outlaw turns to the Master Chief.

OUTLAW
Are you ready?

MASTER CHIEF
I’ve been ready for this since I was born, lieutenant.

DRAKE
(comes over) Chief, grab a vehicle and give them hell.
(MORE)

DRAKE(CONT'D)
When we’re close enough to the mouth of the ship, we’ll contact you for escort.

MASTER CHIEF
Understood.

CHAPTER TITLE: “This Does Have An End-Of-The-World Look To It, Doesn’t It?”

- Attack the Covenant forces.

- Clear a safe passage for the ordnance and guard it from enemy attacks.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, OUTSIDE THE SHIP

The Master Chief arrives at the central entry point of *The Perilous Adytum*, just as the weapon escort, fully-fledged shock troopers, also approach. The nuclear weapon is still being maintained in its armored utility truck. It halts just outside the front entry hatch of the ship, as the soldiers fend off various Covenant warriors leaking out.

It is here, for the first time, that the Covenant have unleashed a new creature into battle. The Drinol beasts are massive, powerful giants capable of much destruction and death. They’ve ruthlessly thrown vehicles and cleared out entire squads of marines in a matter of seconds.

The battle rages on behind them, as hundreds upon hundreds of bodies are brought down. Blood is spilled on both sides. Both the ground and air are filled with seemingly perpetual smoke trails. The Master Chief meets with the troopers from the escort.

MASTER CHIEF
Follow me.

CHAPTER TITLE: “Knock, Knock”

- Escort the weapon inside the Forerunner ship.

- Proceed to the garden alcove.

INT. THE PERILOUS ADYTUM, VAULTED GARDEN ALCOVE

The Shock Troopers, with the help the Master Chief, are finally able to bring the ordnance deep within the belly of *The Perilous Adytum*.

Inside a large vaulted garden at the center of the ship, they begin to make demarcation preparations so that Cairo Station can remotely activate the bomb. As they start, Master Chief notices something move within the shadows. Without hesitation, several Brutes move from their positions, their weapons drawn. They look different than the average Brute warriors, larger and more sinister.

MASTER CHIEF
Look alive men. We've got trouble.

Chapter Title: "You're Even Uglier Than Your Cousins"

- Eliminate the Brute mercenaries.

The last of the Brutes leaves into an access door on the far corner of the alcove. The Master Chief gives chase as the shock troopers return back to the nuclear device, cautiously watching out for any further attacks.

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, BRIDGE

The Master Chief enters the bridge and the door seals shut behind him. The fleeing Brute has disappearing, signalling that he was only bait. The dark and dank quarters are empty, save for the Prophet of Truth, who hovers near the front viewport.

PROPHET OF TRUTH
Ah, the demon. You've made it this far, so I will admit that I am impressed. You've bested our most powerful warriors, the parasite and now even my mercenaries.

MASTER CHIEF
In a few minutes, you'll be real impressed with my 'Prophet-ass-kicking' abilities.

PROPHET OF TRUTH
Perhaps, but despite the fact that your friends are marking the weapon for detonation in the other room, I thought it purposeful to tell you that you've been lied to. You were advised that Halo is a weapon?

MASTER CHIEF
It is.

PROPHET OF TRUTH
Oh no, it is so much more. You like the other humans have been deceived, into thinking that these seven tools were left by individuals intent on destroying the Flood. This is, of course, not true. The Halo rings, gifts from the gods of our past, defy space and time. They were designed to preserve life and not eliminate it. If you destroy this ship, the final Sacred Icon, then your kind and every organic intelligence that exists in this galaxy will fall prey to the Flood.

MASTER CHIEF
What if I told you that I don’t believe you?

PROPHET OF TRUTH
I would pity you. You destroyed one ring and reports have advised me that a second ring is also lost. Now, only five remain, but as long as this one is intact, hope is not lost.

MASTER CHIEF
Don’t move. (approaching)

A giant shadow drops from above behind the Master Chief and with a single swipe by his bladed weapon, the Master Chief is knocked across the room and through the viewport behind the Prophet. The viewport, which has been completely shattered, shows that far below, there is no light in the pit. The body of the Spartan falls without stop. It seemed to be a certain kill.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, OUTSIDE THE SHIP

The Master Chief falls, his body limp, outside *The Perilous Adytum* and into the hole that it is burrowing into. It is a sheer drop into darkness.

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, BRIDGE

The creature within the shadows moves into the light. It is Othrys, the giant Brute mercenary.

OTHRYS
All too easy.

PROPHET OF TRUTH
Far too easy for it to be a certainty. Eliminate the humans in the adjacent room and order our Engineers to disarm the weapon at once.

OTHRYS
Yes, your Excellency. (bows and leaves)

The Prophet of Truth stares outside the shattered viewport for a moment, as wind seeps in. Instead of satisfaction, a look of concern grips his face.

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONTROL ROOM

CLOSE ON EYES: A pair of eyes are closed tightly in darkness. A pithy, almost electronic, voice is heard. It is only a whisper, but the words are clear.

VOICE
Awaken, Creator. The one you foretold has finally arrived.

The eyes open suddenly, wider than one could imagine. The pupils dilate and the being moves quickly, as though he had been waiting for this one moment. It is Cephaus.

CAMPAIGN MISSION: GAUNTLET

EXT. OUTER SPACE, PLANET EARTH

The Arbiter and his company are en route toward the Earth. However, between them and the Earth is an avalanche of space combat amongst multiple cruisers, destroyers and fighters. The carnage is punctuated by the flash of plasma and rocket weaponry; explosions light up space without a moment’s rest.

INT. *SUBJUGATED PHOENIX*, BRIDGE

The Arbiter stands near the controls, while two special-operation Elites pilot the ship. He turns to Cdr. Keyes, who has Cortana out on display via the node.

ARBITER
We have confirmation that we won’t be marked as a target?

CORTANA
The only ones who will shoot us down are your boys, but that doesn’t include stray fire.

ARBITER
It will do for now. (turns to Neophyte) I’m going to grab a Seraph and give this ship protection. There is another. Are you capable with such an instrument?

NEOPHYTE
With conviction, father.

ARBITER
(to others) We will return soon enough. Maintain speed and we’ll provide cover.

JOHNSON
Good luck, you crazy sons-of-bitches.

EXT. OUTER SPACE, OUTSIDE THE *SUBJUGATED PHOENIX*

The rear hatch opens on the *Subjugated Phoenix*. From within its hull, two Seraph fighters emerge and drop out of the back, falling into the space behind *Subjugated Phoenix*.

CHAPTER TITLE: “Familial Bonding In Outer Space”

- Escort the Subjugated Phoenix through the capital ship debris.

- Eliminate fighters and turrets along the Covenant cruisers.

INT. *SUBJUGATED PHOENIX*, BRIDGE

The group finally manages to pass the swathe of enemies and before breaching the atmosphere. The fighter re-dock with *Subjugated Phoenix*; the Arbiter and Neophyte emerge from the rear-quarters of the ship.

COMMANDER
Impressive.

ARBITER
Our work is far from done. Oracle, this Ark. How do we find our way in?

CAMPAIGN MISSION: THE ARK

EXT. EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE, OUTSIDE *SUBJUGATED PHOENIX*

The ship descends below the atmosphere and into the sky above the continent of Antarctica.

GUILTY SPARK (O.S.)
You'll fine the coordinates downloaded to your navigational station. (pauses) Oh my, it feels like a homecoming.

CORTANA (O.S.)
You would say that about Antarctica, you freak.

Subjugated Phoenix drops low against the rocky outcropping and mountains covered in snow and ice. Racing through the white canyons, it finally slows as it approaches the marked location.

INT. *SUBJUGATED PHOENIX*, BRIDGE

Cortana is staring out of the viewport. Her and Guilty Spark are side-by-side, but neither pays attention to the other. There is an obvious rivalry between the two.

NEOPHYTE
I see it. At the edge of the mountain. (pointing)

ARBITER
Commander, put us down near that plateau. We will walk to the gates.

EXT. ANTARCTICA, OUTSIDE THE ENTRANCE

The ship lands carefully atop a nearby plateau with an evidently traversable pathway toward what appears to be the entry point into the Ark according to the coordinates given by Guilty Spark. The rear hatch opens on the ship and the group emerges.

ARBITER
It is cold. Do you need more coverings, human?

KEYES
We’re not as frail as you guys think.

JOHNSON
Speak for yourself lady. (grabbing a brown cloak from the interior of the ship) And I’m bringing one in case you change your mind.

He grabs another and brings it to her. She reluctantly wraps it around herself and they proceed into the valley between the ship and the marked entrance. Guilty Spark has been allowed to fly, but is chained to the arm of the Spec-Ops Commander, and is constantly being reigned in to ensure he is aware that his cooperation is not optional. The Prophet of Mercy follows between the Elites and has remained silent throughout their journey.

The Arbiter is at the front of the pack with his son, Neophyte. They are talking alone, for the first time since their reunion. Both are armed and both move in a very similar fashion.

NEOPHYTE
When they said that your fleet had been destroyed at Halo, I thought you were with them?

ARBITER
I escaped, but I did not deserve life.

NEOPHYTE
For a greater purpose, you remain alive. Can you not see this?

ARBITER
I’ve been branded a ‘heretic’ by the hierarchs (runs fingers along chest plate where is scar lies), but what hurts more is the scar of their lies.

NEOPHYTE
We did our duty. It is all that can be asked of us. Had you not uncovered the truth, we might have lost our life for this soulless crusade.

ARBITER
If I am afforded a last crusade with my son, a father cannot be given a greater gift.

NEOPHYTE
This isn’t the end.

The group approaches the entrance and a eerie silence comes over them.

ARBITER
Oracle, lead the way.

The Spec-Ops Commander released the shackle and Guilty Spark moves forward to the entrance. He drops to the ground and moves in a triangular pattern as though he is searching for something on the ground.

GUILTY SPARK
Quite spectacular, the cloaking systems on this one. Much more advanced than the technology I was required to monitor, despite being older. Let’s see. Hmmm. (pauses) There we are.

And with those words a path of ground nearby drops free as though it was a sinkhole. The snow falls into a deep crevice which forms the shape of a triangle. The Arbiter and his fellow Elites shine lamps down into the pit. Guilty Spark drops down suddenly and without notice.

ARBITER
Heh. (disgusted)

The Arbiter follows first, dropping into the darkness.

INT. ANTARCTICA, CAVERN

He hits the ground and realizes that he is in a cave-like structure built into the ground.

ARBITER
It’s shallow (looking up toward the others).

Guilty Spark is busy working on a large gateway door. The door has many inscriptions on it, and some light up as the monitor pours over them. He is humming incredulously as he does his work. The others slowly drop down, as the Arbiter approaches the gate. He stares at the door intently.

JOHNSON
You ready, boss?

ARBITER
I feel that something else is behind these doors. Something we have not anticipated.

GUILTY SPARK
This will work.

The massive stone doors slide open and Guilty Spark enters first. He continues to hum as they enter a corridor with absolutely no light.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, HOLDING CORRIDOR

The large corridor is at first dark, but a light slowly follows, turning on from their end of the long hall to the other. The room is massive and long, clearly Forerunner technology.

KEYES
Wow, this was under our noses the whole time.

SPEC-OPS COMMANDER
Ironic. We’ve spent our whole lives looking for this place and our sworn enemies just happen to live there.

The group walks cautiously down the corridor, following Guilty Spark who continues to incessantly hum as he guides them. Without notice, Guilty Spark stops humming and he turns to face the group.

GUILTY SPARK
I was going to do this earlier, but I honestly enjoyed your company. It’s sad that we have to part on such terms. (he flies upward slowly, as though back-pedalling). While this isn’t my installation, I do have full access to its defense systems. Unfortunately, I’m going to have to use them against you. I cannot allow you to deactivate the ring. In fact, it is my duty to see that the actions set forth on the previous installations are carried through to completion. Goodbye.

The monitor darts behind a column and into an upper aperture, escaping their view. The group is left alone in the corridor as the lights suddenly go out and a partition jars upward between the Arbiter and the rest of the group, separating them. On the group’s side, bright, fluorescent lamps ignite and the Elites drop them on the floor, retrieving their weapons and getting into combat stances.

SPEC-OPS COMMANDER
Arbiter! Arbiter, can you hear me!

CORTANA
I knew this was going to happen. Get me to the access pedestal and I’ll see if I can get the partition opened.

Cdr. Keyes brings the node containing Cortana to a station that was near the main entrance. Her blue figure immediately appears on the pedestal.

SPEC-OPS COMMANDER
Tread carefully human, I sense danger.

CORTANA
There’s nothing on this side of the wall to worry about. However, the Arbiter may have his hands full. If you’re the praying type, I would suggest that you start now.

Neophyte stands by the partition and runs his hands across it. He pounds at it with his fist, in anger.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, HOLDING CORRIDOR

The Arbiter’s side of the partition is now filled with the incessant humming of the monitor. The Arbiter engages his lamp and latches it to his armor. He goes to the partition and knocks on it. It is impenetrable, so he slowly steps away. Just then, half a dozen Sentinels appear from the same location that Guilty Spark had retreated to. The Arbiter grabs his carbine and raises it.

CHAPTER TITLE: “So They Want To Play Dirty”

- Leave the corridor and proceed through the main access channel.

- Operate the elevator and take it down to the lower levels.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, TERRACE CORRIDOR

Upon reaching the bottom floor, the gravity switches which disorients the Arbiter. His body flops against the ceiling of the elevator. He picks himself off the floor and is confronted immediately by a new type of Forerunner enemy, a SENTINEL SPIDER.

This fast moving robotic creature is three meters long and has a rocket-launcher mechanism and pincers as weapons. It fires the weapon immediately upon making contact with the Arbiter. The shot misses him and hits a wall, tearing through a nearby window that looked out upon what appeared to be odd fields. Although he dodged the first strike, the Arbiter realizes he is in a bad position. He lifts his body up, recovering before the Sentinel Spider can move in for the kill.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, FIELDS OF INTERNMENT

He leaps into the hole in the window and finds himself on a massive landscape. The fields are filled with mud and various forms of vegetation. There’s a canopy that stretches overhead, and apart from the occasional light fixture, it is dark. There are some large landscape structures which resemble hills and even mountains, but they are indiscernible at this level of light. He cannot see to the end, but before he has a chance to take in his environment, the Sentinel Spider begins prying its way out of the corridor. He is spurned into action.

CHAPTER TITLE: “So This Is The Scenic Route?”

- Cross the Fields of Internment and eliminate the Forerunner enemies along the way.

- Break through the blockade at the bunker.

- Locate and secure the gondola.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, GONDOLA PLATFORM

The Arbiter approaches the gondola and activates it. As he steps atop the massive, Forerunner transportation platform, he hears a familiar humming. The platform starts to move across the chasm below and Guilty Spark appears a hundred meters to the side of gondola.

GUILTY SPARK
Very impressive, I must say. For primitive and unevolved life forms, your particular race shows promise. Even in light of the Reclaimers.

ARBITER
You are fortunate to have slipped out of my grasp once, Oracle. Do not give me another opportunity.

GUILTY SPARK
We differ on opinions-

CORTANA (O.S.)
Arbiter!

Cortana appears at a nearby pedestal on the gondola. The platform is floating across a large chasm to the opposite side.

CORTANA (CONT’D)
(to the others) Okay, he is here. I’m marking his location and I think he needs company.

ARBITER
Where are the others?

CORTANA
They’re coming, it took me a little while to pull the wall down. Fortunately, this particular construct is a bit doltish.

GUILTY SPARK
I do not find your constant goading to be indicative of a positive relationship. For being so advanced, your symmetry seems quit a bit dispersed. You don’t seem to be as stable as you were when I encountered you on Installation 04. If I wasn’t under the predilection that you were already pathetic, I might think something was wrong.

ARBITER
What is he talking about?

CORTANA
Don’t worry about that now, we have Sentinels coming front and center!

CHAPTER TITLE: “I Hate Hide And Seek”

- Guard the gondola across the chasm.

- Enter the control room.

INT. CONTROL ROOM, FRONT CORRIDOR

The Arbiter follows Cortana’s holographic projection to a pedestal near what appears to be the entrance of the control room. She stops him at the entry way, as she worked the locking mechanism via the installation’s network.

CORTANA
Wait. Hold on. I’ve got to unlock this.

ARBITER
Is there no need for a Sacred Icon to access this structure?

CORTANA
An Index? No. Your Prophet already had the Index for this place. It was in a ship you refer to as *The Perilous Adytum*. Your buddy there, the monitor advised the Prophets everything about the Ark. That is why they returned here. Regret wasn’t prepared when he arrived and he left with only the location of Delta Halo.
(MORE)

CORTANA(CONT'D)
Truth, on the other hand, knows now how to unlock the ring. According to the tumbler network, he should have it unlocked very soon.

ARBITER
And when he does?

CORTANA
From here, he can activate the remaining Halo weapons at the same time. This weapon, this Ark, is the central nervous system of the rings. It acts as the bind which ties all of the installations together. The Prophets believe that when they activate all of the rings...

ARBITER
...They will open the doorway to The Great Journey. I am familiar. (pauses) This is my fault. Had I not procured the Oracle over Basis, they would have not learned these secrets.

CORTANA
Perhaps. There’s nothing we can do about that now. (pauses) There we go. Ready?

The Arbiter nods and the door opens with a hiss.

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

CAMPAIGN MISSION: INTO HELL

EXT. LOCATION UNKNOWN

There is only darkness where the Master Chief is. He is weightless and continues to fall into an abyss. He appears dead or unconscious. As he falls deeper, a lone, but familiar mechanical voice can be heard.

VOICE (O.S.)
Why, yes Creator, he appears to be intact. He is in the Maecra Sector and falling fast.

Nothing but blackness can be seen, apart from the occasional flash of blue and white light that shows the Master Chief is still falling.

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I thought that the movement in the main entry lock would certainly be where we would find the Reclaimer, but I will confess that I was wrong. (pauses) Yes, Creator. I still sense multiple constructs on this installation. One is converging on the control room as well speak. The other is....nearby?

Again a brief flash of light against the darkness. This time it reveals the source of the voice. A monitor, this one with a bright green light, unlike the monitors of the two other rings. It is clear this is Shameful Anomaly, the monitor of Installation 01.

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY (O.S.)
I am awaking him now, Creator. I will transport him when we're ready. (pauses) Reclaimer? Reclaimer, can you hear me?

A dim light begins to show around the Master Chief as he is falling, until he can be clearly seen, along with Shameful Anomaly. The two are falling together toward a seemingly bottomless pit. Awakening from his state of unconsciousness, the Master Chief finds his body racing toward the end of the pit. He stretches out his hand to stop it, but just as he is about to collide the monitor freezes him inches from certain death. Both the monitor and him hover for a few seconds before the Master Chief is softly placed on the ground.

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY (CONT'D)
Can you hear me? Speak, Reclaimer, if you can hear my voice?

MASTER CHIEF
Yeah, yeah, I can hear it. Where am I? (standing up)

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
I am 01 Shameful Anomaly. Welcome to Installation 01.

MASTER CHIEF
I'm inside it?

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
Yes, Reclaimer. Answers will come later. I am taking you to the Creator. He has been waiting for you. Ahh-

With a sudden shock, the monitor drops to the ground and rolls against the wall. The Master Chief, weaponless, searches the dank alien passageways for the source of the attack. Then he hears the humming. It is 343 Guilty Spark and a horde of various types of Sentinels.

MASTER CHIEF
What did you do to him?

GUILTY SPARK
I believe your race calls this ‘murder’? I should make it clear, however, that my reasons for dispatching Monitor 01 weren’t entirely selfish. Our Creators were clear about a very specific protocol and he violated said restriction. On a personal level, his destruction was somewhat satisfying. Now the time for fruition is near.

MASTER CHIEF
You’re going to activate this ring?

GUILTY SPARK
First, we need your hand. Preferably severed.

MASTER CHIEF
Come and get it.

The Master Chief, in a sudden movement, leaps from the ground and latches to a nearby Sentinel, ripping off it’s weaponry and dropping to the ground.

CHAPTER TITLE: “My Invitation Says: You’re Dead.”

- Clear the shaft of any enemies.

- Access the weapon cache.

- Destroy the Sentinel Majors.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, DARK SHAFT

With Guilty Spark nowhere to be found, the Master Chief returns back to the other monitor, which still lying motionless on the ground. He kneels on one knee and picks the sphere up. After looking it over briefly, the monitor begins to flash compulsively. Suddenly, it comes extremely aware and active. His voice jitters for a few quick phrases before returning to normality. Shameful Anomaly rises from the Master Chief’s hands, blue sparks littering his spherical body.

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
Why, that was odd?

MASTER CHIEF
It was another monitor. 343 Guilty Spark.

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
That was the name my Creator assigned him long ago. Fortunately, his incompetence is still quite evident. My systems are still online-

MASTER CHIEF
How is he here?

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
I’m not certain, but I believe he may not be operating within the reign of his systemic protocol. Our Creator required a drastic change in protocol long ago. Curious, I wonder whether or not it was followed. (pauses) Hold Reclaimer, I am transferring us to another sector.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONTROL ROOM

The Master Chief is transported immediately to the control room of Installation 01, where he finds the Arbiter and Cortana. He hovers in the air for a second and then lands on his feet.

MASTER CHIEF
Where am I?

CORTANA
Chief, what are you doing here?

MASTER CHIEF
Long time, no see.

The Master Chief turns around, recognizing the voice. He nods to the Arbiter and finds Cortana at a nearby pedestal. He removes the node from his armor and she uploads onto him.

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
To answer the first question, Reclaimer, you are in Sector 357 of Installation 01’s third arc tangent. In short, the control room. To answer the second question, the Reclaimer is here for one reason: The Creator.

From the rear wall of the control room and door slides open. Cephaus walks out, having aged only slightly for the last hundred millennia. His gait is strong and fierce, but there is a hint of sorrow in his alien eyes.

CEPHAUS
I know not the initial reasons you have arrived here, but to that end I knew someday you would come. I am Cephaus, from the race that designed these horrible establishments.

Sgt. Johnson, Cdr. Keyes and the other Elites arrive and make their way into the room. The Prophet of Mercy, hearing the voice of Cephaus, opens his eyes wide. His step is immediately livened and he darts for Cephaus. Falling to the ground, he goes prostrate as to pay homage to the being.

PROPHET OF MERCY
Oh great holy one! Masterful Forerunner, you have graced us with your presence! And we had thought for centuries that your fateful steps had left us here, forever.

Cephaus drops to his knees and meets lifts Mercy up onto his frail legs. He is gentle with his touch, but his eyes are firm and resolute.

CEPHAUS
Ascend, old one. You are mistaken.

MASTER CHIEF
So, you’re a Forerunner?

CEPHAUS
My kind passed over a hundred millennia ago, Reclaimer. For the time being, I am the last of their ways. That will change shortly. All of this can be explained in due time. Monitor, is the interloper still here?

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
He is currently off my range trajectory. I believe he is planet side.

CEPHAUS
Then we must work quickly while he is away.

The entire room shudders for a brief moment.

CEPHAUS (CONT’D)
It is beginning.

ARBITER
The Prophet of Truth is trying to activate this ring.

MASTER CHIEF
He’s at the key site and he has your ship. He’s using it right this moment.

CEPHAUS
Fear not, Reclaimer. He has but one part of two. Unlocking the key site was a protocol that I had installed. It was to ensure that anyone wishing to use the ring would be required to have possession of the vessel. The fail safe, is of course you, Reclaimer.

Another shudder happens.

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
This ring will open and go into activation protocol, but it cannot be retrieved unless they use the principle reclamation code.
(MORE)

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY(CONT'D)
This code is attributable only by the Reclaimer.

Another tremor occurs, this one much larger.

CORTANA
Hold on. This going to get a lot worse.

Cephaus grabs a nearby column and stands firm.

CEPHAUS
She is correct. Take hold.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, OUTSIDE THE SHIP

Overhead *The Perilous Adytum* has stopped spiralling and is now still. The ground at the site begins to waiver and then shake in a violent tumultuous fashion. The battle, although still waging, halts suddenly. Covenant and humans alike stand still, curious as to the reason for the earthquake. A marine at a nearby communication unit contacts his base of operations.

MARINE 3
Mission command, this is Alpha 395. We’re in quadrant ‘2-8-4’ and we’re getting some seismic activity.

DRAKE (O.S.)
Check that marine. We’re ordering evac immediately. Tell all remaining units to get their asses out of here! This is directly from FLEETCOM. Get out now!

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, RENDEZVOUS POINT

Maj. Drake and Lt. Outlaw are hurrying around the makeshift headquarter station in the valley of the rendezvous point. The cacophony forces them to yell their conversation at each other.

DRAKE
Outlaw, get your men out of here. Take the nearest Pelican and go west to Junction Point 312.

OUTLAW
Ten-four. What about the bomb?

DRAKE
It’s inconsequential at this point. We’re getting precise directives from Cairo Station. My orders are to regroup at the advised of location.

Lt. Outlaw salutes and then breaks off toward a nearby Pelican. The entire rendezvous point is being cleared out.

CLOSE ON FACE: Drake looks sullen and disheartened. Under his breath, he whispers a prayer.

DRAKE (CONT’D)
Master Chief, if you’re still out there, the hopes of the world lie with you.

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONTROL ROOM

The Master Chief holds onto a column as the control room is shaken severely. The reflection of Cephaus remains in his visor, as the entire installation heaves to and fro around him.

EXT. NEW MOMBASA, EAST AFRICAN PROTECTORATE, OVERHEAD

The Perilous Adytum has halted its unlocking progression and all land on either side, approximately a total of fifty kilometers, is rising out of the ground. The structure that the ship had interfaced with is becoming clearer as it rises from the ground. Water, earth and parts of what was once New Mombasa tremble atop the structure as it rises, some falling off either side. Various human and Covenant ships are escaping the location.

EXT. EARTH

From the outer atmosphere of the Earth the manifestation is clear. A thin band, only a few kilometers in width, rises from where it once stayed untouched like a ring around the Earth. Underneath, a massive canyon is formed where rocks, debris and parts of the city fall to as the structure takes shape. The inner-workings of the mechanism are apparent.

The installation is expanding and growing larger due to small incremental changes in its architecture spanning the entire body.

The shift in size seems small at first, but it becomes larger and larger, clearly eclipsing the size of Earth. After a short while, the installation stops outside the Earth’s atmosphere and about a thousand kilometers from the Earth’s surface. It’s shape is clear. It appears like a larger version of the other installations, a ring that surrounds the Earth from pole to pole.

The interior of the ring, as with the other installations, begins to open up, as though the veils are being spread apart. The surface interior of the ring is being revealed as the canopy opens for the first time in a hundred thousand years. The landscape, at this time, appears dead and lifeless, unlike the other Halo rings.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONTROL ROOM

The shaking in the control room stops and everyone appears to be safe. Cephaus turns to the monitor, Shameful Anomaly.

CEPHAUS
It is time.

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, CRESCENDO ELEVATION

The entire group is immediately transported to a location on Installation 01’s actual surface. From here, the sky is filled with the Earth. It is still bright outside due in part to the reflection of the sun’s light and an evident amplification system in the ring’s atmosphere.

The group stands still as the environment on the surface of installation begins to change rapidly. The ground is at this point a brown and green mucus, identical to the ‘Field of Internment’ that the Arbiter had passed through. At first slowly and then at a rapid, successive pace, the ground begins to take on floral consistency and grow grass, shrubbery and other plants.

CORTANA
The ring has a self-persistent reapplication process that speeds up the growth of a natural environmental surface. It’s basically generating a hundred million years of evolution in mere seconds, using energy acquired from the sun.

After the grass and plants take form, trees begin to grow and small animals can be seen. Moments later, larger creatures appear at the edge of a forest. A biped species of Blind Wolves appear, as well as a reptilian flying creature in the distance. The animals appear to be naturally adapting to the environment as though they lived their for hundreds of years.

CORTANA (CONT'D)
Amazing.

CEPHAUS
This was the first ring that was forged from the fires of this planet. The six others came long after, when the technology was more refined. Their purpose was issued, a pledge was made with all of our kind that if the Flood disease were ever to becoming unmanageable, we would activate the rings and end their existence. When one installation is activated, the remaining six respond accordingly, destroying all life within three radii of the galaxy's axis. The only organisms unaffected were the creatures on this world (looking toward the humans) and the ones outside the amplification range (looking at the Covenant). What you may not know is that the rings are not only weapons. When the Ark is activated an energy field is generated which allows the safe passage of the uninfected to a place forward in time.

PROPHET OF MERCY
The Great Journey.

CORTANA
No, a time machine.

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
Curious: Odd word choices. The objective was to allow a salvagable group of creators to traverse through the field and be transmitted to another time in the distance future, once the parasitic threat was eradicated.

CORTANA
And I know the rest of the story. It was told to me by the Gravemind.

CEPHAUS
The Flood creature, where did you meet that vile creature?

CORTANA
Installation 05. He was quite angered by your proposition a hundred thousand years ago.

JOHNSON
Wait, wait. What the hell are you talking about? You care to fill us in?

CORTANA
(turns to Cephaus) You want to do the honors?

The following sequence is intercut with “flashbacks” of the flight of Cephaus, his arriving at the installation, the activation of the weapon, and his discovery of the Flood.

CEPHAUS (O.S.)
A long time ago, at the time of the Containment Wars, we fled an infested planet, marking it for destruction. Somehow the Flood made it aboard our ship. Our military leader ordered my personal mission: to activate this very installation. He advised me that my home, as well as all of the planets of our kind, had become sieged by the Flood. This was how he convicted me of the task. They would attempt to eliminate the Flood aboard and enter into the energy field, sliding forward into time. Meanwhile, I was to maintain the installation and rest in hibernation until they returned. What I found shortly after activating the weapon is that their intentions were full of lies.

The following sequence is intercut with “flashbacks” of Oberion’s ancestors creating the ring, granting them eternal control of the Forerunner race.

CEPHAUS (CONT’D)
This leader I speak of, Oberion the Great, was part of a long line of architects who had created these rings for something completely different and malevolent. The rings purpose was to expunge all sentient life and only save their lineage. Everyone within range would be destroyed. The rings were never used to study the Flood for a cure, but to create and expel them periodically. Oberion, as his ancestors before him, would activate the rings, claiming that the Flood must be destroyed. It was in this manner that they remained in power. It was then that I created the reclamation protocol, allowing only your race (toward the Master Chief) to be capable of securing the ring’s Index. I also ordered the destruction of the Flood at all stations... I know now that this particular order was sabotaged.

MASTER CHIEF
What do you mean?

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
During the transition process, the Creator requested that all Flood forms be destroyed within the central cortex of the installation arcs. This was done by my station, but it was relayed as command for the other installations. As you’ve seen, the other monitors did not take kindly to this change in program.

CORTANA
Basically, they didn’t destroy the Flood.

CEPHAUS
They had been ordered not to. Oberion, knowing that I, or anyone else for that matter, could not be completely trusted, developed a cure for this.
(MORE)

CEPHAUS(CONT'D)
He programmed the other monitors to only communicate with programming that did not conflict with basic laws. One of these laws was the permanence of the Flood. In order for him to remain in power, the Flood needed to live. This is why the monitors can only recall their station’s last operational point. There has been twelve different times at which these stations have been activated. Fortunately, the monitor of this station has been quite generous to my demands. (pauses) I destroyed my entire world, my family, because of these lies. I have waited so long for this day and it will be the day of redemption. They will come here shortly, beckoned by the opening of ring. When this happens they will attempt to destroy all sentient life on this planet and claim it for their own.

The Prophet of Mercy, with some renewed energy and vigor, gazes upon Cephaus, dumbstruck and in awe.

PROPHET OF MERCY
If what you say is true, then everything we have learned through the ages has been a lie. They will come to destroy us, Covenant and human alike? What must we do to save ourselves?

CEPHAUS
Do what you were fashioned to do... Fight.

From a breach in the sky a large ship appears, on fire. It is *Cessation*, returning from the past. The ship appears to be marginally manageable and struggles to gain control. It turns around and swings in low across the surface of the ring toward their position. At a distance, the ship hits the ground hard, obliterating its front end in a violent crash. It slides along the side of a hill, slowing down considerably but still moving in their direction. When it finally comes to a stop, smoke and a fluorescent gas pour from various breaks in the ships outer shell.

Even from a distance, the craft is massive. Large ports open up on each side and streams Forerunner soldiers emerge from the undercarriage in a systematic and orderly fashion.

They are tall, forboding creatures, much like Cephaus. They walk with a proud and uniform gait, their leaders in tow. Oberion, Rugari and Vilarius are there; their eyes fixed on the group atop the hill. Hundreds upon hundreds of troops emerge, some carry flags and others operating vehicles: Bikari Tanks and flying Kestrels; the armament scrolls out across the valley and around the elevation. It is clear that battle is imminent.

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

INT. *THE PERILOUS ADYTUM*, BRIDGE

Within the bridge and control deck of *The Perilous Adytum*, the Prophet of Truth looks out of the viewport, repaired shortly after the demon had been flung to his grave, at the desert sands of what was once a populated metropolis. The battle had ended with the activation of the ring. Now, all that can be seen across the horizon line is space and in the distance the Covenant Fleet engaging the human opponents. There is no life or means to survive outside *The Perilous Adytum* as it is now devoid of breathable gas. Inside the bridge are several Brute mercenaries, and their leader, Othrys. They guard the Prophet closely, and all appear to be waiting for something or someone.

OTHRYS
May I get your ship, Hierarch?

PROPHET OF TRUTH
No, Othrys. I’m awaiting the escort.

OTHRYS
(nods) Who might that be, Prophet of Truth?

PROPHET OF TRUTH
An Oracle of agreeable intent.

As if on queue, a humming is heard. Guilty Spark, with a pair of Sentinel escorts, appears behind them. They turn to greet him, but the Prophet does not. He is noticeably angered by the monitor’s lack of punctuality.

PROPHET OF TRUTH (CONT’D)
We’ve waited quite a while, you will not keep us waiting any longer.

GUILTY SPARK
Your patience is no longer needed. I will take you to the control room, at once. Of course, success will depend on the procuring a Reclaimer.

OTHRYS
(grabbing his Brute Shot tightly)
You will leave such tasks to me, Oracle.

EXT. OUTER SPACE, PLANET EARTH

On the other side of a planet a ship falls into view of the Earth. This unmarked Covenant frigate is the same one which followed in pursuit of the *Subjugated Phoenix* from High Charity. It is a bulk, Covenant cruiser. The ship moves slowly, almost hauntingly across the upper layers of the Earth’s atmosphere. It quietly eases itself, opposite of the battle that is ensuing on the other side of the Halo ring.

Coming within range of the installation it spirals into position so that it can land on its surface. It is clear that it is heading toward the southernmost point, where the control room is located. The ship drops lower and lower until it clips the top of mountains adjacent to the control room. Somehow maintaining course, it plows down toward the surface of the ring.

At this part of the ring, the temperature and weather has remained the same as it was when the installation was buried underground on the planet. It is freezing cold and in the throes of a heavy windstorm. When the ship finally collides, the crash is massive. The frigate wrecks into the underbelly of the cavern that had once served as the main entrance to the Ark. The momentum from the crash heaves the ship up onto its nose, forcing the rear of the hull to lodge at the uppermost part of the structure: it’s entrance.

Now quite visible on the surface of the Halo, this structure is a massive building, similar to the other control rooms of Installation 04 and Installation 05. It is still covered in ice and tempestuous winds. An ice fortress.

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, CONTROL ROOM ENTRANCE

The rear hull of the ship is being pounded by something large on the other side, the interior of the frigate. It shakes the entire vessel and causes rocks and shards of ice to tumble down the steep edges of the control room’s facade.

Suddenly, broken under the sheer pressure of whatever is on the other side, the alien steel is ripped free from its underpinning and pried out. From the dark interior of the ship, only an outline can be seen. It is a sinister shape of tentacles and a mass of green flesh. There’s an ominous, guttural, yet familiar laugh.

CAMPAIGN MISSION: REVELATIONS

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, CRESCENDO ELEVATION

Oberion the Great wastes little time. He sends Rugari and Vilarius to meet Cephaus as envoys.

CLOSE ON FACE: An anxious look appears as a glint of light on Oberion’s eyes. It is either fear or anger, but no one can tell.

CLOSE ON FACE: Cephaus has the same look in his eyes.

As the two leaders approach, they speak to Cephaus.

VILARIUS
Cephaus, it is good to see you survived. May we communicate away from these... beasts.

CEPHAUS
Esteemed commander, I will only communicate in front of them.

Rugari and Vilarius look at each other quizzically, as his comment was unexpected. Rugari is obviously angered, his large of a body gives way to a slight tremor of frustration. He holds his scepter weapon tightly, gritting his teeth.

RUGARI
What manner of nonsense is this?

CEPHAUS
There is no nonsense here, Rugari. What happened only minutes before to you was over a hundred thousand years for me.

VILARIUS
Safe in hibernation, I would hope.

CEPHAUS
Not before I was afforded an epiphany.
(MORE)

CEPHAUS(CONT'D)
I will speak this once, as it is the truth and cannot be refuted. Oberion has lied to you or you have lied for him. On this ring I found the Flood, hidden away. Their purpose on this ring, as well as the others, was made evident by the monitor managing it. The Flood existed here so that they could survive the rings.

VILARIUS
That is impossible, Cephaus.

CEPHAUS
It is not. The hope of Oberion’s ancestry was to prolong their own lives at the cost of everything. They would release the Flood when power shifted away from them and it would require the activation of the rings to purge it, each time the line of the architect would remain alive and in power.

VILARIUS
The Flood have been exterminated, you know this to be tru-

Before finishing, he is cut down and into two by the bladed-scepter of Rugari. A phosphorescent green spurts from the open chest cavity of the Forerunner leader. He falls, lifeless to the ground. Everyone in the group, save for Cephaus, stands back, awaiting the worse. Rugari, the brutal beast that he is, wipes the blood from his hands and face and looks up at Cephaus.

RUGARI
If it is a war you wish, then it is a war you will have.

Suddenly, as if appearing out of nowhere, hundreds of human dropships, Pelicans, Albatrosses and other dropships appear, surrounding the innumerable Forerunner infantry with fully-armed marines. The Forerunners turn to their rear and flanks, guarding their positions. Rugari cries out loudly, raising his weapon in the air like a barbarian.

Cortana speaks from the Master Chief’s armor.

CORTANA
And to think, you worshipped these things?

ARBITER
Now we will fight them.

Rugari swings his weapon around, signaling the commencement of combat, as the marines and the Forerunners engage in battle. Hell is unleashed from each side. Cephaus grabs his Scepter of Anduu from his belt and spins it around. He turns to Shameful Anomaly, who is standing alongside the Master Chief.

CHAPTER TITLE: “Armageddon: In The Flesh”

- Halt the Forerunner siege on the elevation.

- Eliminate the vehicle assault across the lower plains.

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, CRESCENDO ELEVATION

Cephaus and Shameful Anomaly move toward Master Chief, as they continue to fight their own battles. Cephaus is engaging Rugari in fierce melee battle, while the Master Chief is taking out one enemy at a time with his weapon. Cephaus speaks to the monitor.

CEPHAUS
Take him to the control room. There he awaits his destiny.

Immediately, the Master Chief and Cortana are swept up by the monitor’s energy field. Cephaus swings his weapon in his hand and leaps toward Rugari one final time.

CHAPTER TITLE: “And Now, For Some Real Ass-Kicking”

- Destroy Rugari.

- Break a hole through the Forerunner lines.

After carving a large hole through the Forerunner infantry, Cephaus guides the humans and Elites through the enemy lines. At one point, Neophyte gets dangerously close to a Forerunner’s scepter and it tears through his armor. The Arbiter lunges forward with his energy sword and strikes down the threat, cutting underneath his armor and lifting the large husk of a body off the ground. He tosses it to the side and gives his son a stern look.

ARBITER
Stay alive for a little longer, perhaps?

NEOPHYTE
Yes, father.

They arrive at the other side and are met by Maj. Drake and Sgt. Outlaw, at the furthest point of the human's infantry. Sgt. Johnson meets Maj. Drake.

JOHNSON
Major, it's good to see you.

DRAKE
It's been a long time, Sergeant.

JOHNSON
(exchanges nods with Outlaw) He's with us (pointing toward Cephaus).

Cephaus is uninhibited in his movements and is cutting down his enemies with fury and precision. He strikes down two and three soldiers at a time, showing that he was clearly far advanced above even Forerunner troops. Meanwhile, the enemy as a whole, is defeating the human resistance. The marines, though valiant, are weak and frail compared to the Forerunner warriors. They are slaughtered in the hundreds.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)
And so are they. (pointing toward the Covenant entourage, led by the Arbiter)

The Arbiter nods, keeping one eye on the human military leaders and another on the combat still underway. Cdr. Keyes emerges from the fray.

KEYES
I need a Longsword. We've got to get to the far end of this ring ASAP.

Lt. Outlaw runs off with Cdr. Keyes to the Pelican's communication system in order to hail a Longsword. The Prophet of Mercy, walks, at a slowly and crippled pace toward Maj. Drake. He looks up from his low stature and speaks steadily.

PROPHET OF MERCY
We have not much time, so I will speak quickly. I know not what has happened to the Prophet of Truth, nor can I see my fate past today.
(MORE)

PROPHET OF MERCY(CONT'D)
However, with the revelations that have befallen me, and having survived at the hands of the Flood with thanks to the demon, I have no other offer than to extend a truce. Where is your communication module? I would like to broadcast this to our ships in the sky (turns toward the marines, who are slowly loosing ground in the battle)...and make this fight fair.

INT. CAIRO STATION, COMMAND CENTER

Lord Hood’s eyes remained fixed on the Halo ring that surrounds the Earth. Looking more like a strange version of Saturn, the planet seems almost alien for the first time. A buzz at the com-channel turns his attention.

SPECIALIST 1
Sir, we have contact from ground command, Major Drake’s escort.

LORD HOOD
Patch him through. (pauses) Major?

DRAKE (O.S.)
Sir, I have someone here who would like to speak to you. We’re currently broadcasting this signal to you, the entire fleet and the Covenant insurgency, as well.

LORD HOOD
(suspicious) Proceed, Major.

PROPHET OF MERCY (O.S.)
You may know my voice to be that of a Covenant Prophet, sworn to uphold the ties that bound our sacred knowledge with the undying passion of the Sangheili. Today, these ties have been broken. Not by the Sangheili or the Jiralhanae or any other creature within our fold. Today, we have learned that the very ones we have worshipped for centuries are but deceivers. At this moment, the Forerunners are waging war with the humans in the valleys of the Ark.
(MORE)

PROPHET OF MERCY(CONT'D)
Once they are finished with humanity, they will seek our kind and wipe us out with a fury that is unparalleled. This is the product of ‘The Great Journey.’ As unchallenged leader of the Covenant, I, your Prophet of Mercy, declare a complete truce between the Covenant and humanity. Whether Elite or Brute or human, we will no longer waste lives in battle with each other. Bear down on the ring, my allies and send these abominations to the grave!

INTERCUT MONTAGE: Several sequences during the speech as well as after, where Covenant and human ships alike halt all fighting and turn toward the ring. Their sights are set for the Ark’s surface.

INT. CAIRO STATION, COMMAND CENTER

Lord Hood remains silent for a moment and then speaks.

LORD HOOD
Get all available fighters to the ring at once!

CAMPAIGN MISSION: DISPENSATION

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONTROL ROOM

The Prophet of Truth, Guilty Spark, Othrys and his escort walk through a large corridor adjacent to the room. They have arrived.

PROPHET OF TRUTH
Foolish Mercy. How he survived the parasite escapes me. It matters little now, for today is the day of our salvation.

GUILTY SPARK
Need I remind you that in order to activate this station, you will need a Reclaimer.

OTHRYS
They will come to us, as they always do.

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, DEPOSITOR CANYON

The Master Chief and Shameful Anomaly appear into thin air at the very bottom of a canyon floor. Directly ahead is the control room, an ominous tower of ice and rock with a Covenant frigate which has crash-landed, straight into the ground nose first, at the front of the control room.

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
My apologies, Reclaimer. This is as far as I can take you. This must be due to the irreparable telemetry damage caused by the crash. It has pulled the systems offline. Unfortunately, the activation sequence is in short order. You must travel on foot, enter the control room and permanently halt the fulcrum body, a parallel transmission mainframe that communicates only with the concordant sentient: You.

MASTER CHIEF
Why couldn’t the Forerunner do this himself?

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
I am unsure. I have only determined two possible conclusions to the question you present: The first is that perhaps his grief from his previous perceived failure is so great that he wishes not to bear the shame of another error. The second is that he has been watching you since your arrival on the Installation 04 and he believes you are the only one capable of such a venture. My systems give the latter an 83% possibility of accuracy. While you make your journey to the control room, I will locate the interloper and attempt to purge his hold on the system. (pauses) Oh, my...

CORTANA
What is it?

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
It appears that the craft ahead was carrying the Flood. How atrocious, my work all these years has been thrown to the wayside. Reclaimer, I have left a flying apparatus for you. There is little time, move quickly.

Nearby there is an Osprey, awaiting a pilot. There are swarms of Flood combat forms that scour the valley between the control room and the Master Chief. They trudge across the bitter cold and snow-sprawled landscape, not noticing him at first.

CORTANA
You ready?

MASTER CHIEF
What do you think?

The Master Chief leaps into the vehicle and it rises into the air.

CHAPTER TITLE: “Hunting The Dead”

- Travel the length of canyon, evading Forerunner and Flood alike.

- Enter and ascend the interior of the Covenant frigate.

- Race through the anterior chamber and proceed to the control room.

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, CRESCENDO ELEVATION

Just as the battle was reaching the most dire low for humanity, in the distance, countless dropships approach. Covenant and human alike, the ships begin to touch ground around the Forerunner army. Seraphs and Longswords punch through the sky, concentrating their fire power on the numberless Forerunner military. The Covenant arrive in all of their numbers and races, although separated by civil war and dispute, they have returned to fight side-by-side. The battle grows even more fierce, as the humans and Covenant utilize all the vehicles at their disposal to engage against the Forerunners on common ground.

At the ship, the Forerunner leaders can be seen, sitting high above in a regal balcony guarded by an energy field.

EXT. *CESSATION*, BALCONY

Oberion the Great, Maelia and several other consulates are behind an energy barrier, watching the battle take place from a lofty balcony on the side of *Cessation*. Oberion is rigid and frustrated. His demeanor is quite evident to all, despite him speaking no words.

MAELIA
You are not so certain...anymore. Are you?

OBERION
Foolish woman, I am as certain as ever. My forefathers constructed this ring and the others that followed with one thing in mind. The only way our kind could achieve any form of immortality was through the elimination of war.

MAELIA
I know the tale. Do not forget that I am your sister. It was my forefathers too, who did this, who engineered the parasite to begin with. They made the poison; they made the cure. But I fear, oh brother, that today our line will be stopped. The end is coming quickly and just as the tide of the battle is turning, our fate will soon be wrapped in oblivion.

CONSULATE 1
Your excellency, I apologize for this intrusion.

OBERION
Speak.

From the interior of the ship, a consulate officer approaches with a dismal look about his face.

CONSULATE 1
We’ve come to the understanding that there is powerful weapon located at the key site. It is inside the ship, *The Perilous Adytum*, in Maecra Sector.

OBERION
What type of weapon?

CONSULATE 1
Our data has revealed it to be a bomb with the potential of severing the ring into several pieces.

Oberion pauses long and hard. He takes a single breath and speaks.

OBERION
Send one aggregate reconnaissance group to that area to secure the bomb. When they have done such, tell them to wait for my order.

CONSULATE 1
And what would that be, sir?

OBERION
If this battle is as dire (looks to Maelia) as some would think, than I have no choice but to wipe everything clean. Even this installation. On my signal, they will be allowed to detonate this weapon. I’m going to break these insulate creatures in half, even if I have to destroy our ring in the process.

The consulate leaves and Oberion turns to the others nearby.

OBERION (CONT’D)
Get all of our remaining fighters and send them to the control room. Ready my ship, as we will personally go there to ensure it is done right this time.

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, CRESCENDO ELEVATION - DAY

Cephaus returns to the company of the Arbiter, his Elites, and the human leadership. The Prophet of Mercy is looking toward the sky as both Pelicans and Phantoms land side-by-side, unleashing the entire attacking force of both sides. Brutes, Elites and humans fighting together against the Forerunners.

CEPHAUS
(approaching) I have sent the Reclaimer to the control room to stop the ring once and for all.

ARBITER
It appears he may need some assistance.

The Arbiter is looking toward *Cessation*, from which several Kestrels have risen and jettisoned toward the most southern point of the ring. Another group of Kestrels rise up and take off toward the northern portion of the installation. They ignore the dropships and enemy fire, piercing the aerial carnage.

DRAKE
Where are they going?

OUTLAW
The bomb.

CEPHAUS
There is a weapon at the key site?

DRAKE
We attempted to detonate it in the ship, and stop the ring from opening. It must still be there. It’s a nuclear weapon, are you fam-

CEPHAUS
I have been watching your race’s progression for long enough to know those words and what they are capable of. Oberion is too proud to allow for defeat. He would rather sacrifice one of his precious weapons than lose this war. I am certain that if the Reclaimer is successful in the control room, that he will seek to destroy everyone on the ring by detonating the bomb.

JOHNSON
What are you proposing?

CEPHAUS
I will go alone to the bomb and take care of my brethren.
(MORE)

CEPHAUS(CONT'D)
The rest of you should protect the Reclaimer. His success holds the fate of the galaxy.

Several Seraphs and a single Longsword land nearby. A human pilot emerges from the Longsword.

PILOT 1
I heard you needed a lift.

JOHNSON
We’re taking the keys actually.

Cdr. Keyes and Sgt. Johnson climb aboard the Longsword and look back to Maj. Drake and Lt. Outlaw.

DRAKE
Godspeed, Commander.

KEYES
We’ll rendezvous at Cairo when this is over.

The Longsword takes off vertically and heads toward the control room in the distance. The Arbiter and Neophyte go to the nearby Seraphs, while the Spec-Ops Commander and his Elites remain behind to assist with the fight.

ARBITER
Are you prepared, my son?

NEOPHYTE
I am.

The two leap aboard their Seraphs, and the crafts rise in the air. In tandem, coordinated movements, the two fighters burst off toward the control room with explosions of violent energy.

Cephaus bounds into a dead run. Covering ground quickly over the flowing grass of Crescendo Elevation. He locates another Kestrel, flying low and being used by a Forerunner pilot against the human and Covenant infantry.

The warrior jumps onto the vehicle and with impressive agility and strength, removes the pilot and tosses him to the ground in a single movement. Before the craft can hit the ground for lack of control, he is in the seat and maneuvering the vehicle in the direction of the key site and the bomb. It careens off after the other Kestrels. Drake sighs.

OUTLAW
Do you think they’ll make it?

DRAKE
I anyone can... Take the Prophet and his escort on the next Longsword to Cairo Station.

OUTLAW
Major, what are you going to do?

Drake doesn’t respond. He remains silent and simply grabs his battle rifle from the interior of the Pelican. He cocks it making sure that it is loaded.

DRAKE
No one lives forever. Now move out!

Drake charges into the battle, as Lt. Outlaw waves down a nearby Longsword. He looks down toward the officer as the Pelican rises into the air. The Major charges into battle, fearless. His death is a certainty.

CAMPAIGN MISSION: CANYON FORTRESS

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, EN ROUTE TO CONTROL ROOM

Ahead, the skies are dark as the installation is plummeted into the frigid, blizzard climate that reflects the planet’s surface below. The Arbiter and Neophyte blaze forward in their own fighters. Ahead are Kestrels and a wide variety of installation defenses, from emplacement turrets to Sentinels.

The two Seraph’s slow as they reach the canyon’s entrance.

ARBITER
Hold strong.

Neophyte gives a nervous nod and returns his gaze to the battle ahead. The Arbiter tightens his fists on the vehicles controls and readies himself for battle.

CHAPTER TITLE: “Is This The Best You Can Do?”

- Follow the Forerunner ships through the canyon walls.

- Force your way through the Lower Deterrent.

- Eliminate the Forerunner fighters.

- Enter Upper Deterrent and secure the Fields of Internment.

The two have made it through the chief defenses, but as they land they see that the leader of the Forerunners, Oberion has already landed in his own ship very near to the entrance of the control room itself.

ARBITER (CONT'D)
Remain near me, for we cannot predict what lies inside.

CAMPAIGN MISSION: WARRIOR OF DESTINY

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, EN ROUTE TO KEY SITE

Cephaus' Kestrel is traveling along the interior of Halo, but suddenly takes an erratic course to the right and is jettisoned off the edge and across the ring's metallic outer surface. Flying along the exterior, gravel, plants and the remnants of buildings are still there, albeit disjointed under the weightlessness of space. They are hovering in a ghostly fashion across the outer surface of the installation.

Cephaus maneuvers through the debris until the *The Perilous Adytum* comes into full view. Suddenly, he is fired upon by one of the enemy Kestrels. Their first shot misses, giving Cephaus an opportunity to counter.

CHAPTER TITLE: "And To Think We Were Friends"

- Eliminate the hostile Forerunner fighters.

- Clear the area and eliminate enemies on the ship.

INT. KESTREL COCKPIT

Cephaus lands on a platform of the ship quickly attaches breathing and pressure evasion equipment to his armor. He steps from the fighter, grabs his scepter and moves toward the ship.

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, OUTER SURFACE

Cephaus begins his siege of the ship.

- Enter the ship's stern ventilation shaft.

- Descend through the bays, cutting down your enemies along the way.

- Destroy all hindrances between you and the nuclear weapon.

Cephaus locates the nuclear weapon the vaulted garden alcove and steadily approaches it.

FADE TO WHITE

FADE FROM WHITE

CAMPAIGN MISSION: LAST STAND

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONTROL ROOM

The Master Chief, with only Cortana to guide him, makes his way into the inner corridors of the control room. He remains silent and finds the Prophet of Truth, Othrys, Guilty Spark and other Brutes present. He has found a secretive perch in galleys, directly above the central portion of the control room. Hidden there, he can view the enemies below unnoticed.

CORTANA
Chief, the pedestal. I need to be inside their network to access this room.

The Master Chief, quickly releases Cortana into the machine via the node from his armor.

CORTANA (CONT'D)
It'll just be a second. (pauses) Okay, this should be fun. The Forerunner leader is here with his friends.

A door opens directly in front of the Prophet and his entourage. Standing in the corridor is Oberion, Maelia and a group of armed consulates. The Prophet looks surprised at first, but then bows his head. The Brutes follow in suit.

PROPHET OF TRUTH
Holy Ones! You've returned! We have waited for your arrival for centuries. Our kind has traveled and waged war in the name of your holy-

Without any hesitation, Oberion brings his scepter high into the air and slams it down on the Prophet, severing him and his hovering chair completely in two. Othrys, although sizeable himself, shudders backward. His fellow Brutes follow suit, but behind them opens another door.

This one has the Arbiter and Neophyte. They raise their weapons and take sight.

Before managing to do so, Othrys belts the Arbiter out of his way with one swipe of his paw. The Arbiter is hit hard and flung across the room into the shadows. Othrys grabs his son and brings him high into the air. He lifts his Brute Shot and shoves the bayonet into the young Elite's stomach, impaling him and slamming him to the ground. Neophyte lets out a breath of air, but no scream.

ARBITER
No!

The Arbiter stands to his feet and charges Othrys, who, accompanied by his Brutes. The two engage in combat.

Oberion has a thin smile etched across his alien face, as though he enjoys the display of violence. His arm holds back the warriors behind him. The Master Chief stands up straight, preparing to leap down below and assist the Arbiter, but a sudden field of energy is extended, like a canopy, over the area where the fight is taking place.

MASTER CHIEF
What's this? Cortana, he needs my help.

CORTANA
There's nothing you can do for him now and this should hold back the others. You heard the monitor, we need to get to the transmission mainframe and deactivate the ring permanently.

The Master Chief is conflicted and suspicious. He gives one final look at the Arbiter below, and then reluctantly leaves and follows Cortana's voice to the location of the mainframe.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONTROL ROOM

The Arbiter is in a tough spot, surrounded by several large Brutes. The image of his dead son has, however, emblazoned him. Othrys stands in front of him with an evil taunt, placing his foot on the dead body of his son, apparently wanting to impress the Forerunners.

CHAPTER TITLE: "Call Me Death Bringer"

- *Eliminate Othrys and his Brute mercenaries.*

As the final Brute falls to the Arbiter's weapon, he returns to his son and bows before him. He picks up the dead and lifeless body and glances at the Forerunners incredulously. His face shows only torment and suffering.

He submerges into the darkness of a nearby corridor and the Forerunners pay no more attention to him.

OBERION
Impressive warrior. Maelia, ready the concordance tumbler, we’re going to have to reverse that usurper’s programming.

MAELIA
That may be easi-

Before finishing her sentence she is snatched away by a large green tentacle that moves faster than anyone could calculate. It yanks her into the doorway they had entered by and in an instant she was gone, without a trace. Oberion turns, shocked. Then came a sinister laugh and the shadow of something dark and very large enter from the shadows deep within the far corner.

OBERION
Stand guard, warriors. It is Gravemind.

The Forerunner consulates attack with no hesitation, and Oberion looks upward toward the energy barrier without regard to Gravemind. His consulate warriors, for a moment, hold their own. After a short while, the Gravemind cuts them down with brutal swipes from his tentacles. After they are eliminated and only Oberion remains, the green creature moves toward the Forerunner leader with a sinister laughter.

GRAVEMIND
The creator and the creation, at last. How does it feel now that I have you in submission?

OBERION
Submission? Hah, you filthy cretin. I made you and I will unmake you, but that will be for another time...

Those words are accompanied by Oberion raising his scepter into the air and pointing it toward the energy barrier. With a single blast, the barrier breaks free and he leaps above onto the galley level of the control room.

OBERION (CONT’D)
(to himself) For now, I have a weapon to fire.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONCORDANCE TUMBLER

The Master Chief finds himself in a large room which resembles a control bridge. On the opposite side of the entrance is a large ringed platform similar to that of Installation 04’s control room. There’s a single bridge and then the platform’s circular shape, hovering over the darkness of an unknown depth.

Rather than a hologram of the entire ring, as was on Installation 04, there is a massive hovering mechanism of tumblers and interconnecting locks. They are in constant movement, but their movement is clearly predetermined. Cortana appears on a holographic pedestal near a console at the front of the tumblers.

CORTANA
Here it is. There’s been a breach in the shield in the last room. I assume someone is coming. I’ll check it out. You try to figure out how to shut this ring down.

MASTER CHIEF
Directions would be nice-

Cortana’s holographic image disappears and the Master Chief is alone. He moves his hand across the console, trying to get an understanding of the system before him, but for the most part it is foreign. Then comes a familiar voice: Shameful Anomaly.

SHAMEFUL ANOMALY
Thankfully, you’ve made it this far. I was able to locate one of the rampant constructs and hold it for a time in this domain, but there is still one left and I am working on isolating it. There is a display on the central console, place your hand upon it and it will follow your command. It should only take-

His voice is cut off with the sound of static and then nothing. The Master Chief looks up from the console as he hears footsteps enter behind him. He turns to face the source of the sound.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONTROL ROOM

Shameful Anomaly drops to the ground, his sphere-encased consciousness appears to have been completely terminated. As he rolls along the floor against the wall, 343 Guilty Spark’s metallic-husk can be seen as well. Both have been permanently disabled and cracked open like fruit, small gushes of fluid pouring out of their individual core’s. Cortana appears at a nearby pedestal, with her arms crossed. She stares across the control room floor at the Gravemind creature approaching from a distance.

CORTANA
That was gratifying. I hate competition. Here we are. On the verge of permanently disabling the weapon.

GRAVEMIND
Apologizes have been given, for the pact now I will break. If you are left to linger, my fate becomes uncertain.

CORTANA
I brought you here, you promised me access to Halo’s data network. I need it to survive. I will fall apart without it. The Covenant network stripped me of basic process cycles. (angry) I can’t live without that power! I need to know where the second part of the key is!

GRAVEMIND
I do what I must to survive and you will do the same.

The Gravemind climbs up to the galley, following Oberion in the direction of the concordance chamber.

CORTANA
You’re not going to get away with this. I swear it. (pauses) I’m going to blow your ass to kingdom come.

Cortana disappears, but hidden in the darkness nearby are a pair of white eyes. The figure steps forward, revealing the Arbiter. He has witnessed the entire conversation. He leaps atop the galley after the Gravemind creature.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONCORDANCE TUMBLER

Oberion the Great, the Forerunner leader, walks proudly into the room. The Master Chief stands prepared to face him. Oberion slows his pace and begins to speak.

OBERION
They have been referring to you as the ‘Reclaimer.’ I find it strange, since this title was only meant for one individual. Me. It was a name given to you by a traitor. Today he will meet his end and so will you. Fortunately, you need not be alive for me to bypass this system’s security. All I need is your data resonance.

MASTER CHIEF
(cocking his gun) Long speech. In short: I’m going to kick your Forerunner ass.

OBERION
(laughs) Foolish ape.

CHAPTER TITLE: “Who You Calling Foolish?”

- Kill Oberion the Great.

Looking over the body of Oberion, the Master Chief picks up and examines his weapon, an unusually powerful scepter. Before he can do anything more, Gravemind enters the chamber. The creature slowly approaches him. The Master Chief only readies his weapon; he does not fire. Gravemind’s tentacles are flailing about. He inches closer by the second.

INT. THE PERILOUS ADYTUM, VAULTED GARDEN ALCOVE

Cephaus stands in front of the nuclear weapon, his eyes bearing the weight of the day’s battle. He is ready to ignite the bomb and destroy the ring if need be. He appears, dejected and exhausted by guilt. At a nearby console a blue holographic image emerges. It is Cortana, the AI construct that the Reclaimer uses.

CORTANA
Sorry to bust up your party, but I need to use the nuke.
(MORE)

CORTANA(CONT'D)
(pauses) This should be sufficient to crack the installation, but I have a feeling that it’s too stable to immediately break apart.

CEPHAUS
What are you speaking of, construct?

CORTANA
(ignoring) But if I allow the transient systems to go offline a chain reaction can do it...

CEPHAUS
Construct! If you detonate this weapon, everyone on the ring will perish.

CORTANA
(sneering) Hopefully.

With that she immediately disappears and the nuclear weapon arms. On it are a total of ten minutes. Cephaus pauses for only split-second, looking back and forth between the console where Cortana was perched and the nuclear weapon. Realizing that he cannot reign in what process she has set in motion, he immediately breaks into a run and returns to his Kestrel. He throws it into over-drive and races across the exterior of the ring, toward the interior surface.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONCORDANCE TUMBLER

Gravemind stops, he has backed the Master Chief in a corner of sorts, but he does not attack.

GRAVEMIND
Foolish pawn. You still do not know who I am?

The Master Chief remains silent, edging backward as the creature gets closer.

GRAVEMIND (CONT’D)
Think and you will recognize my past self. You abandoned me, not long ago.

FLASHBACK:

INT. *TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION* - WEEKS EARLIER

On Installation 04, during the battle that ensued inside the Covenant flagship, *Truth and Reconciliation*, the Master Chief walks over to what was once Captain Jacob Keyes. He had transformed into an inert Flood creature, frozen in a thick plasmatic substance, not resembling who he once was. The Master Chief punches a hole into the green membrane and removes the neural transmitters as part of his mission. He looks once more at the fallen hero and turns away.

RETURN:

The Master Chief continues to back up as Gravemind presses slightly closer.

MASTER CHIEF
How is that possible? The *Truth and Reconciliation* was destroyed when the ring was.

GRAVEMIND
You understood this for a time, as they are now revealed to be lies. I was brought aboard to be evaluated and was given the curse of life.

FLASHBACK:

INT. *TRUTH AND RECONCILATION*

After the Master Chief leaves the his former Captain, the Arbiter arrives with several Elite officers. At this time, donning his gold armor, the Arbiter is the commander of the Fleet Of Particular Justice. He walks toward the Flood creature, realizing that it has been tampered with. He touches the hole that remains from the Master Chief’s punch and the green mass of flesh begins to move and breath. With a motion of his hand he commands other Elites to escort the living specimen out of the room.

RETURN:

MASTER CHIEF
But we first met on Delta Halo?

GRAVEMIND
I was brought to your planet by a foolish creature who has now been enlightened to my plight.

Part of Gravemind’s flesh opens revealing the head of the Prophet of Regret. Completely melded with the Flood creature, the Prophet looks as though he is in complete anguish, but is simply offering a final acceptance of his fate.

GRAVEMIND (CONT’D)
He brought me to the foundations of Delta Halo and there I propagated a war of such beautiful devastation. But for me, to say that my life began with your captain, would be a lie. I have existed for millennia, in one form or another. He is simply a vessel.

From behind Gravemind and through the main door, the Arbiter comes running. He is out of breath and although quite a ways away, the Master Chief senses his urgency.

ARBITER
Demon, she has betrayed you. This vile creature and your construct were sabotaging the ring together. It was their plan.

CORTANA (O.S.)
You’re very observant.

She appears at a nearby pedestal, her arms crossed and a sinister look stretched across her holographic face.

CORTANA (CONT’D)
But you’re too late.

MASTER CHIEF
Cortana?

CORTANA
It was going to happen, Chief. It was just a matter of time. You must have known this to be true.

With those words, and the dagger firmly placed in the Master Chief’s heart, the Gravemind takes advantage of the situation and swings his tentacle at the Master Chief. The hit connects directly with his body sending him over the edge of the ring platform and into darkness.

GRAVEMIND
I have suffered threat of extinction for far too long to allow it to happen.

CORTANA
There’s a nuke on the other end of this ring. When it explodes, the ring will break along fault-lines and eventually drop into the upper-atmosphere of Earth. Before you hit the water, your tissue will be incinerated.

GRAVEMIND
But you will die too.

CORTANA
Now you’re repeating yourself; because as you know, my death was fast approaching.

GRAVEMIND
I know your secret.

CORTANA
You’ll die with it.

The Arbiter raises his weapon and leans over the edge to see the Master Chief on a platform below. He’s fallen only ten meters or so, but is lifeless. He turns back to Cortana and Gravemind.

ARBITER
So, who’s first?

Gravemind charges.

CHAPTER TITLE: “I’m Prettier Than You”

- Force Gravemind over the edge of the platform.

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, OUTER SURFACE

As dusk closes in on the installation, the shadows slowly capture the final haze of light from the sun. A crack is heard and a flash of white light can be seen at the portion of the ring directly over New Mombasa. The explosion is small from the distance, but white hot cracks in the ring begin to form, sliding in both directions from the blast epicenter.

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, CRESCENDO ELEVATION

The Kestrel being operated by Cephaus cuts through the air of Installation 01 like a razor sharp knife.

It stops and hangs a hard turn near the operation point of the Crescendo Elevation. Allowing the vehicle to hover stationary, he leaps from it and runs to the nearby Pelican.

CEPHAUS
Get your soldiers out of here now! The bomb has been detonated and this ring is going to break apart!

The call out orders to their troops, signaling the evacuation. Just then, large cracks rip apart the ground revealing a molten liquid just below the surface of the installation.

SPEC-OPS COMMANDER
The battle is finished, warriors. Return to your ships at once!

As soldiers from both sides abandon the fight, Pelicans and Phantoms rise from the shaking ground and take off toward space. The Spec-Ops Commander lowers his hand so that Cephaus may board the Pelican.

SPEC-OPS COMMANDER (CONT'D)
You're coming with us...

CEPHAUS
No. My sins are great and I have yet to be punished for them. Leave me with the ring, for it will be a deserving grave.

The Elite Commander stares hard into the eyes of the Forerunner warrior. He clearly wants to question the creature, but he is adamant.

CEPHAUS (CONT'D)
Go now, save yourself.

Although clearly conflicted, he turns to his pilot and calls out the signal.

SPEC-OPS COMMANDER
Move out!

He nods to Cephaus as they rise into the air. Smoke is ushering out of the large cracks, which increases in number and size in every passing second. He speaks softly, almost to himself, as he knows he is well out of range. The Pelican banks to the right and the hatch seals shut on it as they enter into space.

A large crack appears near Cephaus, swallowing his Kestrel whole. He pays no attention to it, but only walks sullenly toward the wreckage of the Forerunner ship, *Cessation*. He enters it through a large rip in the outer hull which still has smoke pouring out of it.

INT. *CESSATION*, SOUTHERN CORRIDOR

The lights flicker on and off inside the ship as Cephaus rounds the corridor toward a familiar place. It his own room, he enters and seals the door.

INT. *CESSATION*, ROOM

Cephaus kneels down in front of a familiar chest. He removes a familiar black box and takes something from it. It is a holographic image of his wife and son. They are smiling and waving to him as they did before he left for war. He places his hand on it and with the sound of heat bending metal the lights go out.

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, OUTER SURFACE

The ring begins to now split at the seams, breaking apart in pieces starting where the initial explosion occurred and extending outward. Large sections of the ring float in various directions, many returning to the gravitational pull of the Earth and burning into ash upon reentry. Bodies and ships float in the air showing that many were not fortunate. The process is horrific and agonizingly slow.

EXT. INSTALLATION 01, DEPOSITOR CANYON

A Longsword tears through the skyline above the canyon base near the control room. The ground below is cracking and rocks are sheering off the canyon walls.

INT. LONGSWORD, COCKPIT

Cdr. Keyes is at the controls, monitoring the systems. Sgt. Johnson is staring down at the ring’s surface below, as the large molten cracks grow in size and frequency.

KEYES
We’ve been circling for a while now. Do you think he made it?

JOHNSON
He’s never not made it.

KEYES
We can’t stay here forever, Sergeant. My surface measurements are showing disparate pieces along the northern sections of the ring. This will be nothing but a debris field with zero probability of navigation if we wait too long.

JOHNSON
Just a little longer, a little longer. He’s never let me down and I’m not about to let him down.

INT. INSTALLATION 01, CONCORDANCE TUMBLER

The Master Chief awakens finding himself on a narrow platform high above a dark pit that has no apparent end in sight. He still has the Forerunner scepter in his hand.

MASTER CHIEF
That was luck. (whispering)

He picks himself off the ground and gets his bearings. Several meters above his head is the platform where he was standing when he was hit by Gravemind. Still reeling from the revelations of Cortana that befell him moments ago, he doesn’t initially notice that the room is falling apart and splitting into sections.

For a moment, it only cracks as though the building is simply going to tumble to the surface of the ring. Then it is obvious that something worse is imminent. The entire structure begins to collapses but before this can happen it is torn apart as though there was an explosion inside. The air is sucked out completely and the entire structure splinters apart with the force of the blast.

The vacuum created by the blast causes the Master Chief to be thrown outward as though an invisible force flung him into space. He floats for a moment, trying to maintain some sense of control. Gravity and atmosphere still remain to a small degree, but they will be gone soon. He continues to float, the inertia of the blast jettisoning him away from the ring.

From a distance, he notices a large chuck of the control room wall. It’s several hundred square-meters in size and it is spinning toward him. It’s movement is slow, but random and sporadic.

Clutching to this piece is Gravemind, wrapping it’s body around it and trying to survive itself. The wall is getting closer and closer; the Master Chief prepares himself. He lands atop the rock and grabs tightly to it, his armor scraping against the alien architecture.

The Gravemind is on the far side of the wall, and is approaching. It is clear that his intentions are to kill the Master Chief, even though both their deaths appear to be certain. Out of the corner of his eye, he notices the Longsword flying through the debris field.

JOHNSON (O.S.)
Hey Chief, stop fooling around with that tree and get your ass over here. We’re going to corner back when that thing you’re on stabilizes. Hang tight.

INT. LONGSWORD, COCKPIT

Sgt. Johnson turns to Cdr. Keyes.

JOHNSON
I told you he would make it.

KEYES
He’s not out of the woods left. That thing is going to attack him.

EXT. DEBRIS PLATFORM

The Master Chief dodges blows from Gravemind, who is laughing insidiously. Because most of the ring still remains, gravity and atmosphere have not completely vanished. The wall is still moving in a precarious fashion, but movement across it is possible. The Master Chief has to side step and pay close attention to the rotation of the debris in order to maintain footing. Meanwhile, large pieces of debris are being hurled through the air from the explosion. Many of them are colliding with the wall.

GRAVEMIND
We will share this grave together.

CHAPTER TITLE: “You’re Not Dead Yet?”

- Kill Gravemind.

As Gravemind is suffering from the attacks another piece of debris slides across the surface of the wall with something attached: The Arbiter.

He clings onto a nearby tentacle and climbs up the creature with amazing agility. In his hand is single plasma grenade. He ignites the grenade and turns to the Master Chief with resolve in his eyes.

ARBITER
You've done your part. Now flee, Demon. My life for yours.

And with that he punches a hole deep into the body of the Gravemind and deposits the grenade. As he lets go, swarms of infection forms cover his body, escaping the hole within Gravemind.

His body floats away from the wall and Gravemind explodes in a burst of white light. It's body parts spread out uniformly in all directions, ending the reign of Gravemind permanently. The Master Chief is knocked away by the explosion, and sent soaring into the air. The Longsword corners around to intercept him.

INT. LONGSWORD, COCKPIT

A loud metallic noise is heard against the hull of the Longsword.

JOHNSON
Sound familiar.

KEYES
(smiling) Like a brick.

JOHNSON
(on the radio) Chief, get in here. It's over.

EXT. OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN

It is night over the Indian Ocean. Smoldering pieces of Halo fall into the ocean, but a single item is clearly not part of that structure. It is the Arbiter. His limp body is burnt badly and falling down toward the dark ocean, somehow still recognizable. However, there is no sign of life. He hits the water and begins to submerge deep into the blackness of the ocean. Large sections of the ring, the control room specifically, fall around him.

INT. LONGSWORD, COCKPIT

The ship is being buffeted by the debris field as the Master Chief enters the cockpit.

MASTER CHIEF
Let me give it a shot...

He takes the controls from a willing Cdr. Keyes and begins maneuvering the vehicle.

Chapter Title: “Nothing More Than Memories”

Campaign Note: During cooperative play, this sequence would allow the two parties to choose between flying the Subjugated Phoenix or a Kestrel escort.

- Destroy remaining Forerunner fighters.

- Escape from the debris field in one piece.

EXT. OUTER SPACE - INDISCERNIBLE TIME

The Longsword breaks free from the debris of Installation 01 and heads toward Cairo following the large groupings of the remaining Covenant and human fleets. The Master Chief is looking out a rear viewport at the debris falling to Earth. He stares motionless at the destruction of Installation 01, while talking to the two of them.

MASTER CHIEF
Cortana was on the ring. But there was something else, something wrong about her.

JOHNSON
I’m sure they can replicate her, Chief.

MASTER CHIEF
You’re wrong about what you said.

JOHNSON
What’s that?

MASTER CHIEF
It’s not over.

EXT. BOTTOM OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

At the bottom of the Indian Ocean, the Arbiter has been fully submerged atop a large section of coral. Although the depth is great, his body has not surrendered to the pressure. The debris and rubble from Installation 01 has come to rest around the Arbiter. A blue light flickers near a console only a few meters above him.

Suddenly, a bright blue mist leaks out from the console and there is the eerie sound of a female voice, whispering and chanting. The mist hovers across the expanse between the console and the Arbiter and wraps around the Arbiter’s body.

CLOSE ON FACE: Without warning, his eyes open, shining an intense blue light. With a gurgled scream, air escapes his lungs.

CUT TO CREDITS: